

THE

LEVEL  
ONE

# CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR



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## World

JULY, 1965

August Ready-for-YOUTH Resources

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**WORLD'S UNION LEADERS  
VISIT BELFAST  
TO PREPARE FOR  
1966 CONVENTION**

# ON TAKING A STAND

BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Harold E. Westerhoff



Should the church take a stand in the prevention of alcohol-flavored accidents? An emphatic "Yes" has been the response of ministers, rabbis, and priests all across the country.

The poll showed that 98% of the clergy queried (7,000) favored taking a more active part in helping to educate people to the dangers of driving after drinking. And 85% declared their churches could effectively join forces with the community at large in such a project.

Who asked these questions in a national survey. The churches? No! A religious body? No! It was a secular body that undertook the poll—the Institute for Safer Living of the American Mutual Liability Insurance Companies. The insurance companies are trying to do something to reduce the tragedies, suffering, and useless waste, particularly on

the nation's highways, and brought about by the misuse of alcohol.

In partnership with the insurance companies in the joint endeavor entitled "Church Action for Highway Safety," was The North Conway Institute, an inter-faith, interdenominational organization concerned with the problem of alcohol and how religion can best deal with it.

As you start reading this, whether it be day or night, a life is being lost somewhere on the nation's highways. Before you finish reading, several more lives will have been snuffed out. It is reliably reported that more than half of these lives might have been saved had the drivers involved not been drinking unwisely.

The clergymen polled, see drinking as creating the most serious problems among persons between 21 and 40. It

was felt that the most guidance and education must be centered on young people from 16 to 21. It is claimed that in this age bracket indulgence is growing steadily more serious, and is accounting for many of the most tragic highway accidents.

In spite of the concern registered by those who responded, only 17% have so far participated in any church-oriented activity in this field. Most alarming, 40% of the respondents approved controlled or moderate drinking; 57% stood for total abstinence for all persons; 3% had no definite conviction.

Where does Christian Endeavor come in? Through its Christian Citizenship Witness, in all its society activities, at all times in its programs and emphases, Christian Endeavor must continue to alert young people to the menace of alcohol. The record is in—it speaks for itself.

## Just Ahead in July

### 6-10 — International Christian Endeavor Convention, Dallas, Texas

Contact: International Society of Christian Endeavor, 1221 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43216

### 6-11 — Minnesota Mid-America Camp, Alexandria

Contact: Mrs. Ernest Hone, Jr., 9001 Eden Prairie Road, Hopkins 55343

### 9 — Texas Convention, Dallas

Contact: Charles C. Meek, Box 37, Arcadia 77517

### 30-August 1 — Adult and Young People's Conference, Crestmont

Contact: B. J. Adams, 706 Sycamore Road, Graham 27253

Pray for these Christian Endeavor events!

## COVER CLUES

Examining Belfast facilities are Harold E. Westerhoff (left), World's Union general secretary; Rev. F. Rupert Gibson, chairman of the convention city committee and of the program committee; and Bishop Clyde W. Meadows (right), president of the World's Union.

Photo by Jack McKee



## THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR World

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THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR WORLD

**A** GENEROUS gift from The Diebold Foundation makes possible the continuation and expansion of the Christian Citizenship Witness of the International Society of Christian Endeavor, according to Rev. Christian A. Tirre, citizenship director.

Through the generous financial support of Albert H. Diebold, a Christian layman of New York City who died in 1964, and The Diebold Foundation, this continuing citizenship program is possible. The 1966 Citizenship Awards Program will mark the tenth year that the awards have been named in honor of Mr. Diebold.

Christian Endeavor's fifteenth annual citizenship competition is an Awards Program based on citizenship activities reported by individuals and Christian Endeavor societies in the United States and Canada. Other emphases of the current witness include a program of education on the effects of teen-age smoking, a clean-up campaign against obscene literature, an emphasis throughout program materials on Christian citizenship, and participation in "Know Your America Week."

The Albert H. Diebold Awards for winners in the 1966 Citizenship Awards Program will total more than \$1,000, in

cash, award plaques, and certificates. Deadline for entries is February 15, 1966. Both individual and society winners will be announced on April 25; special awards presentations will be arranged locally by the International Society.

Mr. Tirre comments, "The Christian faith has little meaning unless it is lived daily in all of life's activities and relationships. The Christian Citizenship Witness challenges youth to put 'hands and feet' onto their beliefs—to be witnesses today in their communities in the realm of daily citizenship."

The individual section of the 1966 Awards Program is open to all youth in the United States or Canada who have not reached their 25th birthday by February 15, 1966. Entries can include significant articles, editorials, talks, posters, black and white photos, or cartoons displayed, presented, or released after May 31, 1965, and used as a Christian witness in the community by February 15.

The society section is open to all Christian Endeavor societies or similar youth groups in the United States or Canada or to a combination of societies or youth groups at a local church. The majority of members of participating societies

must be under 25 years of age. Each group must sponsor and report a Christian citizenship activity begun after May 31 and completed by the February 15 deadline.

First award for individuals will be \$150 in cash; second, \$100; third, \$75; fourth, \$50; and four runner-up awards at \$25 each. Society awards include \$200 to the winning group; second, \$125; third, \$100; fourth, \$75; and four runner-up awards at \$25 each. The top eight winners in both categories will receive award plaques, with honor certificates being presented to all other qualified entrants.

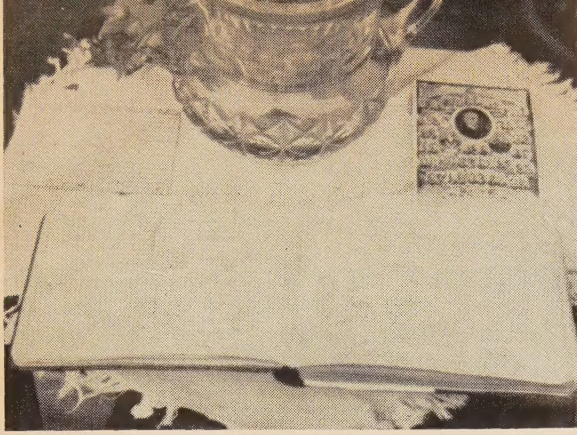
At the closing session of the 48th International Christian Endeavor Convention in Dallas, Texas, July 10 the 1965 winners will be honored. Barbara Jane Zink of Pennsylvania will receive the top individual award, with first place honors for societies going to the Senior High Christian Endeavor Society of Redmond Christian Church, Redmond, Oregon.

Full details about the 1966 Awards Program and a copy of the folder *What Is Christian Citizenship?* may be secured by writing to Mr. Tirre at 1221 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43216.



# CITIZENSHIP AT WORK

*Individuals and societies  
to be honored  
for citizenship efforts  
in annual competition*



MRS. BENTLEY'S GUEST BOOK showing Dr. Clark's signature, plus the card received from him and a picture card of leaders in the 1908 rally.

## Following the Trail of Dr. Clark

By Bishop Clyde W. Meadows  
President, World's Christian Endeavor Union

While on tour in the British Isles I discovered that I had several things in common with the first world president of Christian Endeavor, Dr. Francis E. Clark. In a visit to the Yorkshire Christian Endeavor Federation I shared in a very inspiring Christian Endeavor Rally at Leeds as did Dr. Clark in 1908.

I was invited to the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. Battye, Wakefield, Yorkshire, England. Mr. Battye is a past president of the British Christian Endeavor Union. Mrs. Joseph Bentley, mother of Mrs. Battye, lives in the same home. She is 83 years of age and still actively interested in Christian Endeavor; she attended the rally in Leeds in 1908 and also when I was there on April 21 this year. Soon after I arrived in the home Mrs. Bentley informed me that I was not the first world president to be a guest in her home; then she and her daughter proudly

showed me the family guest book. There was the autograph of Dr. Clark and a greeting written in the book on October 11, 1908. William Shaw's autograph was also in the book. I photographed the page and, of course, added my greeting and autograph on a neighboring page.

But this is not all I found in common with Dr. Clark. I discovered that I am not the first world president to forget things and need at times to write back to friends to have the forgotten articles sent on to me. Dr. Clark left behind an "illuminated scroll" that had been given him. He went from Leeds to Belfast, Northern Ireland (as I did), and then wrote a card to the Benthleys to have the scroll sent on to Harriet, his wife, who was staying in London. Incidentally, Mrs. Bentley was a bride of only three months when she and her husband entertained Dr. Clark and Mr. Shaw.

### Christian Endeavor in Norway

A visit in Norway May 1-3 was included in Harold E. Westerhoff's recent Scandinavian travels. Mr. Westerhoff, general secretary of the World's Christian Endeavor Union, was present when the Christian Endeavor flag was lowered at the end of the day in front of Christian Endeavor House, Oslo (left photo). When President Trygve Modahl of the Norwegian Union addressed a gathering of leaders (center photo), a special banner decorated the room. Mr. Westerhoff had informal discussions (right photo) at the Hotel Continental with Mrs. Anna Johannessen, secretary of the Norwegian Union, and Mr. Modahl.



THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR WORLD

## HONOR SOCIETIES

Since the last list was published of societies and unions who have officially become members of the International Society of Christian Endeavor by financial support during the Membership Mobilization, a number of others have participated in the 1965 Society Roll Call. Organizations listed below contributed during April and May. Those receiving gold seals have contributed \$50 or more; red seals represent a gift of \$30, blue seals \$15.

### Gold Seal

Zeeland Classis Junior Union, Reformed Church in America, Zeeland, Michigan  
Intermediate, First Church of Evans, Derby, New York  
Senior, First Church of Evans, Derby, New York

### Red Seal

Senior, Roseville United Brethren Church, Ayr, Ontario, Canada

### Blue Seal

College, College Park United Brethren Church, Huntington, Indiana  
Junior, First Church of Evans, Derby, New York  
North Carolina Union, Burlington, North Carolina  
East Columbus Christian Church, Columbus, Ohio  
High School, Grace Evangelical Congregational Church, Allentown, Pennsylvania  
St. Matthews Evangelical Congregational Church, Emmaus, Pennsylvania  
Junior, Trinity Evangelical Congregational Church, Lititz, Pennsylvania  
Young People's, Leacock United Presbyterian Church, Paradise, Pennsylvania  
Christian Endeavor Societies, Disston Memorial United Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Northeast Branch Adult Fellowship, Philadelphia County Union, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Young People's, First Presbyterian Church of Olney, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
West Grove Presbyterian Church, West Grove, Pennsylvania  
Senior, Grace United Brethren Church, Sherston, Ontario, Canada

# NEWS AND VIEWS



**CONVENTION TIME** means new officers. Peggy Michaels (left), outgoing president of Mercer County (Pennsylvania) Union, presents a white Bible to Virginia Steese, new president. The annual county convention was held May 2 at Plain Grove United Presbyterian Church, with 200 attending. Theme was "Christ Is the Answer." Conference leaders included Gordon McMordie, John Thuss, Bruce McNeel, Jane Barkley, and Rev. Albert Landis. Dr. R. W. Wighton, former Christian Endeavor leader in Scotland, brought the evening message.

- The Gospel of Mark was the emphasis for Denver District Union's 1965 Bible-reading program. A total of 58 signed commitments at the final rally of this second annual Bible-reading Lenten program. Over 800 Gospels of Mark were distributed according to the report of Harold Brown, general chairman.

- "Christian Endeavor is a wonderful youth program and a family program for all who want to know a closer walk with our Master," says Fred Sawdy of Clarks-ville, Michigan, in writing the annual report of the Barry Christian Endeavor Union. In addition to monthly rallies, the group with the Michigan Union sponsored a hymn sing on May 2 attended by over 300 persons and a Junior-Senior Banquet, also in May. Mr. Sawdy affirms, "There are no limitations in what we can do through Christian Endeavor because Christ is the center of it."

- **FRATERSHIP** is the name for the new look, new approach, new style Christian Endeavor in Scotland. The first of the unconventional, non-traditional type of gathering was held in February in Glasgow with 140 young people participating. They were challenged by Rev. Robert Ferguson and appreciated the singing of the Concords and a ladies' trio. Gone was the formal order of service—here was something different, quite unorthodox! The success of this first **FRATERSHIP** encouraged the leaders to arrange future events with the "new look."



**ALABAMA LEADERS** joined with Endeavorers across North America in the celebration of Christian Endeavor Week 1965. After a rally which over 175 attended, a group of alumni gathered at the home of Ralph and Jean Treadaway for supper and fellowship. Guests included Mr. and Mrs. Warren Thraikill (left) and Mr. and Mrs. Smitty Lucas. Mr. Thraikill is a former vice-president of the International Society in charge of the Southern Region.

- "Above and beyond the ecstasy of winning," says Mrs. Agnes Waldron, sponsor of the Intermediate Society at Queen Street East Presbyterian Church, Toronto, Ontario, "there is a far deeper meaning for the society achievement. I find as each young person strives to serve Jesus Christ, he becomes more aware of His presence in his life. Also I believe that any success of a young people's society comes from long distance planning and then putting everything they have into completing their plans." This society took third place honors in the 1965 Citizenship Awards Program.

**TEXAS OR BUST** was the theme of many Endeavorers as they planned transportation to Dallas for the 48th International Convention July 6-10. The covered wagon (left) took first place in the "horse"-drawn division of the Pioneer Parade in Woodlake, California. It was entered by the Community Presbyterian Church, Rev. Melvin O. Pederson, minister. Lehigh Valley (Pennsylvania) Endeavorers made arrangements to charter two buses like this one (right), shown with some local youth and their leaders. Other Endeavorers will travel by plane, train, car caravan, and every conceivable method of transportation, coming from Canada, Mexico, Guatemala, and the United States.



# Ready - for - YOUTH RESOURCES

## Christian Music in the Society

by Stephen Jacoby, Graduate Student, The Ohio State University

Man has long used music as a means of praising God. Whether it be an organ or trumpet, a choir or a congregational hymn, music can be used to express devotion to God and to acknowledge His greatness. The Bible gives many admonitions to praise God through music. Psalms 33, 81, 92, 108, and 150 are only a few of the many psalms which deal with using music to praise God. In the New Testament both Paul and James instruct Christians in the proper use of music (Colossians 3:16, James 5:13).

Not only does the Bible admonish us to praise God through music; it gives examples of its use by people in the Bible. II Samuel 6:5 tells us that David played instruments for the Lord. We also have the account of Jesus and the apostles singing a hymn before they went to the Mount of Olives on the night He was betrayed (Matthew 26:30). Finally, Revelation 14:2 tells us of the music that will be heard in heaven.

Besides reaching the primary aim as a means of praising God, music also aids us in maintaining the proper attitude in a worship service. Great care must always be taken to make the music used in a worship service the kind that will aid the worshipers, rather than interfere with their worship.

### Singing in the Society

The greater part of the music in a Christian Endeavor society comes in the form of group singing. In addition to the above-named principles, there are other specific reasons for singing, both in church and in the local society.

Martin Luther reformed church music as well as theology. He felt that a congregation should have some way to participate in a worship service, and up to that time that was not the case. Therefore he introduced congregational singing into the service so that each Christian present could have at least that part in the service. This same idea applies to the church today, as well as to the Christian Endeavor society. While only a few members of your group can be leaders in any one meeting, all the members present can sing.

Music serves to unify Christians. The hymns in church on Sunday morning draw the congregation together into a group that can worship God both individually and as a whole. The same is true in the Christian Endeavor society. The song service is an opportunity to take the many individuals present and make them into a united group for worship and study. In a larger sense, music unites Christians throughout the nation and around the world. Those of you who have attended an International Christian Endeavor convention know the thrill of joining with thousands of young people from all over the North American continent in singing hymns and choruses that are known to all Christians everywhere.

Singing can also help train us in the truths of Christianity. Often the text of a hymn or chorus conveys a message that we will remember better through singing than through any other means. This includes general ideas about Christianity like "trust and obey" as well as specific things like the names of the 12 apostles.

### The Song Service

With these general ideas in mind, what are some things we can do to improve our society song services? First, remember that a song service must be carefully planned! Too often song services are the result of a hurried leafing through the song book five minutes before the program begins. The song service must be a meaningful part of the program, and to accomplish this it must be well planned.

For almost any meeting topic a song leader can find hymns, songs, or choruses that apply. It is the meeting leader's responsibility to inform the song leader about the meeting topic and the kind of music he would like, and then it is the song leader's responsibility to plan a song service that will supplement the topic and be in keeping with the leader's plans.

On other occasions it may be better to let the song service be a separate unit. But this does not mean it must be disorganized. The possibilities for various types of song services are innumerable: songs dealing with a single subject (love, faith, etc.); songs by a single author or composer; music from a particular historic period or a certain country; songs whose texts come directly from Scripture (this can be done in the form of a quiz, where the song is sung and then the members try to identify the Scripture on which it is based); a sequence of hymns dealing with a series of aspects of Christianity; stories behind hymns—how they were written. These are only a few ideas for special song services that can make the singing more purposeful to those present.

Finally, song leaders, meeting leaders, and sponsors should work together to keep variety in meeting planning. Too often we feel that we have to have a song service, announcements, topic presentation, and benediction, in that order. This is by no means the case. Plan the program so that the entire meeting has a purpose. All the elements should build to a climax, whether that climax be a talk by the leader, the Christian Endeavor pledge, or a hymn. The song service can come at any point in the service where it will be most useful in serving the purpose of the meeting; or in some cases the songs can be scattered throughout the meeting. Use imagination, originality, and careful planning in deciding what kind of song service to have and what kind of outline to use for the entire meeting.

### Resource Materials

First, know the difference between hymns, Gospel songs and choruses. Hymns are dedicated to praising God for His greatness (as *Lead On, O King Eternal* and *For the Beauty of the Earth*). Gospel songs are more concerned with the joys of the Christian life and salvation (as *Jesus Saves* and *Sunshine in My Soul*). Choruses are shorter songs, without stanzas, and again usually dealing with some aspect of the Christian life (as *Saved to Tell Others* and *Into My Heart*). These are by no means the only categories of religious music, but these are perhaps the three most common ones. A leader should be sure to select the right kind of song for the purpose he has in mind.

Your greatest resource book is your own church hymnal. If you are interested in church music, you should take the time to sing straight through your hymnal from front to back. You will no doubt be surprised at how many beautiful hymns you find that you never knew before. Also, become familiar with the various indexes in your hymnal. There should be many that can be useful to you when you are planning a song service.

Your society should also have a good song book of its own. *Christian Endeavor Songs* (1963), published by the International Society of Christian Endeavor, includes hymns, Gospel songs, and choruses especially planned for the local society. It is a good investment for any society.

Many books on hymnology are also available. Your denomination or brotherhood may have a companion book for its hymnal with information about each hymn, its author and composer, etc. Nearly every religious publishing house carries several books dealing with other aspects of church music. Either your minister or church library undoubtedly has books of this type. Books on hymnology are also available at most public libraries.

# Topics

## FOR JUNIOR HIGHS

Topic 1 of a Unit: Tame Your Time and Your Talents

# Nothing to Do!

Matthew 25:1-13

### Our Aims

1. To take stock of how we spend our time.
2. To inspire a sense of stewardship and responsibility concerning God's gift of time.
3. To consider worthwhile usage of our time, in the light of our accountability to the Lord.

### For Publicity

Make a poster in the shape of a clock. Set the hands at the hour of your meeting. Print *Where Does the Time Go? Come to our Christian Endeavor and find out.* Add a welcome to all summer visitors.

Also notify your church secretary and ask that the topic be announced in the church bulletin.

### For the Leader

Summer vacation can be a rewarding, fulfilling experience. It can also be a series of dragged-out days with nothing to show for the entire summer. This topic is designed to inspire a desire for a worthwhile use of time. There is much truth in the saying "Satan finds things for idle hands to do." In order to make this an effective meeting, you the leader should:

1. Ask God to show you personally the value of time and the responsibility for its wise use.
2. Keep a record of your own activities daily, for one week prior to this meeting. This will give meaning to the self-quiz suggested in the program.
3. Check to make sure all preparations have been made for this meeting: soloist and panel members invited; questions typed or written on slips for "Beat the Clock" quiz; slips prepared for self-quiz; letters cut out for the memory verse; talks on the topic assigned to three members of your group.

### Committee Activity

#### Lookout Committee

Make a special effort to meet and greet every teen-age newcomer and visitor. Don't be satisfied with merely singing, "There's a welcome here." Ask yourself, "How would I like to be treated if I were a stranger?" and then apply the Golden Rule. Genuine friendliness is the best attendance booster.

#### Devotional Committee

Check on progress of the Talent Show scheduled for next week (August 8):

places to exhibit the entries, judges invited, winners' ribbons prepared (these can be made by purchasing lengths of colored ribbon, cutting with pinking shears into four-inch lengths, and printing with white ink First, Second, Third).

#### Missionary Committee

Keep before the group the vital need for prayer for missionaries in these days when many are in physical danger. Stress also the prayer for national Christians in missionary countries. Consider making a missionary's son or daughter of junior high age your special prayer project. Your minister will arrange this for you gladly.

Do some scouting around your neighborhood to discover any home missionary projects to tie in with this emphasis on the wise use of time. Be ready with specific suggestions.

### Suggested Program

Pre-Prayer Service

Call to Worship: Psalm 29:2

Hymns: *I Am Thine, O Lord; Give of Your Best to the Master*

Scripture Reading: Matthew 25:1-13

Prayer (by a member of the devotional committee)

Announcements and Offering (make detailed announcement of special summer activities for the benefit of visitors)

Scripture Contest: "Beat the Clock"

Memory Verse (for two weeks)

Chorus: *Saved to Tell Others*

Leader's Introduction

Talks on the Topic

Self-Quiz: A Time for Everything  
Special Music: Solo, *Must I Go and Empty-Handed?*

Quiet Hour Emphasis

Panel Discussion

Problems to Discuss

Brainstorming

Hymn: *Take My Life, and Let it Be* (with special emphasis on "Take my moments and my days")

Benediction



### Memory Verse

(Ecclesiastes 9:10a)

(to be emphasized this week and next)

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

Use a flannelgraph board and cutout letters made from scraps of colored flannel. Keep the verse before the group at both meetings.

### Leader's Introduction

Our topic this week concerns time and what we do with it. Time is possibly the one thing that each of us has in the same amount. We may be different in every other way: in looks, ability, interests, money; but as far as time is concerned we are absolutely equal. To each one of us is given 24 hours in every day.

"Where does the time go?" we often ask ourselves and each other. Before we proceed with suggestions of how to make better use of these hours, it might be helpful to try to answer this question. Find out how we're presently spending our time. To do this we've prepared a self-quiz. Try to think how you spend a day and mark in the various times.

(Distribute quiz sheets and pencils)

Activity	Hours	Minutes
I sleep		
I eat		
I read		
I help with housework		
I do my homework		
I watch television		
I listen to radio or records		
I study my Bible and pray		
I participate in athletics		
Total hours accounted for	_____	
Total hours in each week	_____	168

Hours unaccounted for \_\_\_\_\_

Allow about eight minutes and then ask each one to read aloud the number of hours totaled. Encourage a few minutes' discussion and then suggest that papers be taken home for reference during the coming week.

### Talks on the Topic

#### First Speaker

The Lord Jesus had been answering the question of His disciples, "Tell us,

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from previous page)

... what shall be the sign of thy coming" (Matthew 24:3). Christ continued this sermon, known as the "Olivet Discourse," with some practical teaching on the wise use of time. The Master Teacher always used illustrations that had meaning for His listeners. He drew parables from familiar scenes and customs they would understand. Even today it's a common sight in Eastern countries to see a procession led by a bridegroom. He is carried by four friends in a small carriage decorated in bright colors. Music is played and a herald goes ahead calling, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh!" People join the procession along the way, and when it is held at night each one carries a small torch, lighted by oil. The oil is carried in a bottle, separate from the torch.

### Second Speaker

Does it seem stupid to you that anyone would start out with a lamp and no oil to keep it burning, like the foolish women in our Scripture reading? That would be like taking a flashlight to camp and finding out the first night that the batteries were dead or the bulb burned out.

This parable should remind us to make sure *while it is still daylight* that we've made provision for the darkness. Since this is a parable (an earthly story with a heavenly meaning), we have to look for Christ's lesson to His disciples and to us. In the Bible oil represents the Holy Spirit. If we belong to Christ through faith in His atoning death for our sins, we have the oil, the Holy Spirit. (Read Romans 8:9,16). We need never be called foolish but wise.

### Third Speaker

"While the bridegroom tarried" is what I am going to speak about. Christ is called the Bridegroom, and the Bible teaches clearly that He is coming back to earth again. In fact there are 320 references to His second coming in the New Testament. We don't know the day or hour or even the year He will come, but we can learn the lesson of being prepared whenever He does come. What is it that made one group wise and the other foolish in the parable Jesus told? It was how they spent the time until the bridegroom came. Each had the same time. One group made preparation; they were wise. The others wasted the time until it was too late. The wedding was for a select group as weddings usually are, and the others were left outside. No crashing this party! But they could have been prepared and welcomed inside instead of hearing, "I know ye not."

## Problems to Discuss

### Problem #1

Nancy has been giving a great deal of thought to how she could spare more time to serve the Lord. Her problem is that her parents are antagonistic. Many times they scoff, "Why don't you just take your bed to that church?" They are not church attenders themselves.

Nancy is popular and is regularly nominated for offices. Feeling that to accept would create more antagonism at home, she refuses to be president or secretary of the society. Is she doing the right thing? Should she rather try to explain that it is an honor to be asked to be an officer and then go about proving that serving God does not hinder her from doing the duties her parents expect of her?

### Problem #2

Craig is the son of one of the church officials. The kids insist, "Craig, your dad's on the board. You should . . ." and they try to pile responsibilities on him. The problem is that, in spite of diligent study, Craig barely manages to keep a B average. His philosophy is that the best use of his time is being a good witness by studying hard and not flunking his subjects. Do you agree? Or do you think he should be willing to give more time for Christian Endeavor even if it's at the expense of his grades?

## "Beat the Clock" Contest

This may be a boys-against-girls contest, or two mixed teams may be chosen. Five points may be earned for each correct answer. Set a timer for five seconds and award five points if the answer is given before the bell rings. Take off points if clues are needed.

Questions are "Who said . . .?" and each question deals with "time."

1. Who said, "redeem the time"? *Paul* (Ephesians 5:15).

2. "It is not for you to know the time or the seasons"? *Christ* (Acts 1:7).

3. "The Lord will be a refuge in times of trouble"? *David* (Psalm 9:9).

4. "Come to the kingdom for such a time as this"? *Mordecai* (Esther 4:14).

5. "He changeth the times and seasons"? *Daniel* (Daniel 2:21a).

6. "In the last days perilous times shall come"? *Paul* (II Timothy 3:1).

7. "A friend loveth at all times"? *Solomon* (Proverbs 17:17).

8. "I will bless the Lord at all times"? *David* (Psalm 34:1).

Other verses may be added with the help of a Bible concordance.

## Panel Discussion

Arrange a panel of two parents and two Junior Highs. Each person should speak for two minutes on the question "Are there more demands on our time today than were made on young people a generation ago?" Some points to suggest

are: Parents walked to school; today's pupils usually ride. The great emphasis on science since Sputnik has resulted in more and harder homework. Also college admission is more demanding.

After the panel presentation allow questions from the floor and some discussion. Steer clear of next week's topic on talents however.

## Brainstorming

Brainstorm for any remaining time on specific projects to make worthwhile use of time.

Here are suggested projects for foreign missions. Have a letter-writing bee and write each missionary your church supports. Make these newsy letters.

Collect left-over Sunday school papers and make attractive booklets. Take four consecutive weeks (careful that serial stories are complete in each booklet) and cover with sample wallpaper (available from dealers). Contact nursing homes, hospitals, children's homes, etc. regarding the *personal* distribution of these booklets. They are light enough for invalids to hold and contain messages that are a blessing.

Discuss other local possibilities such as letter writing for a blind person, reading to sick children, and baby sitting free for a mother who needs a little outing. Your own church could possibly use the help of your group in a cleanup campaign of the grounds or mending hymnbooks or nursery toys.

Also for foreign missions, there is a great need for *children's books* for libraries to be used by the missionaries' children. The favorite classics as well as Christian titles are in great demand. Books may be sent at a low rate by regular mail and are not generally items that missionaries will have to pay duty for receiving.

A profitable ministry to travelers will widen the influence of your church or society. Ask permission to place an attractive literature rack in train and bus depots, and where possible in airports. Keep a supply of fresh, clean tracts and booklets (Sunday school papers are most acceptable). Stamp each item with your church stamp and pray God's blessing on those who will read the literature.

## Daily Bible Readings

M. July 26 Ready for Action Exodus 12:3-13  
T. July 27 Action Delayed Luke 9:57-62  
W. July 28 Our Days Are Numbered

Psalm 90:9-12  
T. July 29 Delay Is Dangerous James 4:13-17  
F. July 30 Ripe Harvest Fields John 4:35-38  
S. July 31 A Need for Workers

Matthew 9:35-37  
Sun. Aug. 1—Topic: Nothing to Do!  
Matthew 25:1-13

Comments by Mrs. Ernest A. Lockerbie of Huntington Beach, California, a freelance writer and minister's wife

Topic 2 of a Unit: Tame Your Time and Your Talents

# Does Your Talent Show?

Matthew 25:14-30

## Talent Contest

Arrange a talent contest as a part of this meeting. Post the following list with a name and telephone number where would-be contestants may receive further detailed instructions. Announce the contest for at least two weeks ahead of time.

Intersperse the contestants (music, poems, preaching) throughout the program.

*Music:* vocal and instrumental

*Art:* posters and other forms of publicity

*Elocution:* readings or poems

*Preaching:* talks on the topic

*Other:* crafts that are helpful in missionary work or church activity

## For Publicity

The talent contest will provide excellent publicity. Ask each entrant in the art section to create a poster (or suitable publicity item), including time and place of meeting. Display these prominently in your church. Also ask your minister to make special mention of the topic and issue a general invitation from the pulpit or in the church bulletin.

## Preparation

Give out pointers for talks on the topic (to be expanded to three minutes on the given subject). Assign dialogue parts. Check with the pianist to make sure that music entries are rehearsed. Have awards (*see last week's suggestion for making ribbons*) ready for the presentation. Before the meeting arrange all art and craft entries in the meeting room and plan with judges as to the manner of judging these and the program entries.

## For the Leader

Many a talent, discovered in a youth meeting and dedicated to Christ, has been a blessing to others and has enriched the life of the talented person. Therefore this can be a strategic as well as an interesting meeting, if prepared and publicized well.

Pray much that the real purpose will be accomplished as outlined in the aims of this meeting.

## Our Aims

1. To stress the fact that each one does have some talent or talents.
2. To develop a sense of stewardship of our individual ability.
3. To consider how best to use our God-given talents.

## Leader's Introduction

We've all heard about certain people who are called by others "talented folks." Does this make you think that talents are distributed to just a select few? This is not what the Bible teaches. As we proceed with our program we'll find out what God has to say to us on this subject.

## Quiz on the Daily Readings

With open Bibles let the members locate the answers to the following questions. List the daily readings on the chalkboard for easy reference.

1. Luke 12:42-48. How is the justice of God made plain in these verses? *Answer:* "He knew . . . he knew not . . ." (vv.47,48).

## Suggested Program

Pre-Prayer Service

Call to Worship: Ephesians 2:10

Hymns: *In the Service of the King;*  
*Living for Jesus*

Scripture Reading: Matthew 25:-  
14-30

Prayer in Unison: the Lord's Prayer

Announcements and Offering

Special Music: Vocal solo

Leader's Introduction of the Topic

Quiz on the Daily Readings

Special Music: Instrumental Number

Talks on the Topic

Dialogue: "Plus and Minus"

Buzz Session

Quiet Hour Emphasis: Mention the projects suggested in last week's meeting and ask three members to pray for wisdom and initiative to carry these out faithfully.

Reading or Poem

Awards to Contest Winners

Closing Comments

Hymn of Consecration

Benediction



2. Isaiah 1:16-20. What are two conditions for blessing? *Answer:* willing and obedient (v.19).

3. Mark 10:42-45. What is the Bible standard of a great person? *Answer:* one willing to serve others (v.43).

4. Psalm 100:1-5. How many reasons for glad service are listed in this Psalm? *Answer:* seven. Four in verse 3, three in verse 5.

5. Romans 12:1-8. Which verse teaches that no one is without talents? *Answer:* "Having therefore gifts . . ." (v.6).

6. II Timothy 1:6-14. What should encourage timid Christians to make use of their gifts? *Answer:* the power God gives to enable each one (v.7).

## Dialogue: "Plus and Minus"

Participants stand in front of the group and speak alternately. Provide paper and pencils and ask the members to take notes as they listen. At the close allow a few minutes to discuss the reactions of the audience.

("Plus" and "Minus" may add points that apply to their own situation if desired.)

*Minus:* I wish I had lots of money. If I had, I would help *everybody*. I'd give to missions and buy things for poor folks 'n—oh, all kinds of things. I would get things Mom and Dad have always wanted. Especially I would give to my church.

*Plus:* Well, now me—I'm thankful for the bit o' money I do have: my allowance and what I can earn baby sitting and at other chores. It's kinda fun to decide how I can spend my own money. Sometimes I get a kick out of not buying, say a record I've been looking at, and giving the little bit extra when I've heard a missionary.

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**Minus:** I always wished I could sing and be in the youth choir, but folks all know that I can't carry a tune in a bucket. And I'm not brainy enough to give the topic talks or anything like that. I guess I'm what you might call a "no talent" Christian.

**Plus:** I'm no world beater as a singer either, but I heard that the choir leader needed somebody to help in other ways. A kind of music librarian I suppose. This saves time for the choir members. As for not being able to get up and give talks you've worked out yourself, have you thought you might give a reading you could memorize? I know I always enjoy hearing these. They can be a real addition to our program lots of times.

**Minus:** I've always thought it would be wonderful to be the most popular Junior High in town. I would have so many friends it would be a cinch to get new kids to come to Endeavor. I never seem to know whom to ask.

**Plus:** I admit this makes me think. I have neighbors I haven't even invited to our meetings. Before I begin to hope to be more popular I had better try to witness to the friends I already have. You've certainly made this responsibility clear to me. That's where I have been minus. That's for sure.

## Talks on the Topic

(Suggested pointers to be used in each of three 3-minute talks)

**First Speaker:** Do you realize it takes more effort to make an excuse than it does to be obedient? I found this out by reading today's Scripture lesson. I'll show you what I mean. Take verse 15: the first man in the parable is given five talents. It takes him exactly 16 words to report what he did with these. That's in verse 20. Then the second man did the same. Two talents, and 16 words to make his report in verse 22. The third man had to do more talking. His excuse is made up of 43 words, nearly three times as many as the first two. So it seems to me that it would be easier to do something you know you should do than to have to think up a good excuse for not doing it.

**Second Speaker:** God doesn't expect As from a C talent student. He makes this plain. Each man in the parable received "according to his ability." God knew what he could do with what he was given. The Lord expects us to do our best with what He has committed

to us. He will judge us only on that score. The same commendation was given to both the five- and the two-talent steward. At the same time we should remember that God will not be satisfied with a C report from an A talent person.

**Third Speaker:** The talents in the Bible are strictly money, a medium of exchange. This makes me realize that God will hold us accountable for how we spend our money, even though we think the little bit we have isn't important. It also seems to me that if the talents in the Bible had been what we think of as talents and spelled out as specifics, we would have no scope for individuality. God has made us all different with varied abilities. He needs all kinds of people to carry on His work. I think we should be more anxious to do what we have ability to do, than to be wishing we were somebody else.

## Buzz Session

While judges make final decisions, divide into groups according to the number present, mingling visitors in with the members. Each group will appoint a reporter to record their points of discussion. Buzz for a set time on:

1. What if you don't know what your own talents are. How do you find out?
2. Does it seem fair that some have "all the talents" while others have few? Are there compensations for being short on talent?
3. How can you use your God-given abilities to the full and yet not appear to be conceited and proud?
4. Who, in your opinion, was the most talented Christian in the New Testament, and on what do you base this opinion?

When the groups come together have each reporter summarize their findings. As time permits discuss ideas for the most effective stewardship of any talent and the result of hiding it. Discuss this question: Whom do we really rob when we do less than our best? The answer is found in the following illustration.

A builder had an employee whom he trusted. One day the employer announced, "While I go on a trip, I'm leaving you to supervise the building of a house. The choice of materials, labor, everything is in your hands while I'm gone."

The house was built, but the man in charge, conscious that his boss was not around to observe, made a shoddy job of the building. It looked very good, but the man who had been entrusted with the task

knew what it was really like: that it was not a durable, well-built structure.

The builder came back from his trip, called his employee into his office, and said, "I didn't tell you before I left, but the house I asked you to build is *your* house. You were building for yourself."

## Closing Comments

Repeat the *memory verse* (same as last week), "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might" (Ecclesiastes 9:10a).

After having thanked each contestant and especially the guest judges, point out that while all have enjoyed this program, you trust it has been more than enjoyment. Unfortunately not all can win blue ribbons or other prizes, but *nobody is a loser* in a talent contest. The fact that one entered means that he acknowledges his God-given talent, and he can be sure of God's blessing for doing this. This is of more importance than the awards given during the meeting.

Point out that the popular idea is that the church slacks off in summer. The "summer slump" it is called. Solomon, the writer of Proverbs, had no such idea. He advocated stepping up the summer program: "He that gathereth in summer is . . . wise" (Proverbs 10:5). Heeding this advice will forestall the lament, "The summer is ended, and we have not done a thing for Christ."

## Daily Bible Readings

- |             |                                 |                   |
|-------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| M. Aug. 2   | Judgment According to Privilege | Luke 12:42-48     |
| T. Aug. 3   | Willing Service Needed          | Isaiah 1:16-20    |
| W. Aug. 4   | The Measure of Greatness        | Mark 10:42-45     |
| T. Aug. 5   | Glad Service                    | Psalms 100:1-5    |
| F. Aug. 6   | Our Gifts Differ                | Romans 12:1-8     |
| S. Aug. 7   | Use God's Gifts                 | II Timothy 1:6-14 |
| Sun. Aug. 8 | Topic—Does Your Talent Show?    | Matthew 25:14-30  |

Comments by Mrs. Ernest A. Lockerbie of Huntington Beach, California, a freelance writer and minister's wife

Hymns listed in program outlines in THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR WORLD have been selected from the new CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR SONGS. This book, with an attractive orange and black krome-kote cover, contains 138 songs and hymns and 20 responsive Scripture readings for youth meetings. Available from International Society of Christian Endeavor, 1221 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43216. Price: 60c each, \$6 per dozen, \$48 per hundred.

Topic 1 in a Unit: Bible Biographies

# A Brave Queen

Esther 4:10-16



## Introducing the Topic

One of the most interesting books of the Old Testament is the book of Esther. Since Esther contains only nine chapters, suggest to the young people of your group that they read this book through during the week before your meeting. To make matters a bit more interesting, ask them to mark down the number of times the word God appears in this book.

You might begin your discussion something like this: By this time all of you have read the book of Esther at least once. How many times did you find the word God? (Pause.) Not at all? That is not surprising, for the word God does not appear in the book of Esther. This book does not mention prayer, nor does it give any specific spiritual instruction. Yet the book is full of truths that are important for life.

## Presenting the Topic

One of the interesting ways to begin the presentation of this topic is in terms of character studies. There are several interesting characters in this book. You might like to follow either of these two methods: (a) Have a shadow picture study. A sheet is hung up, and a light reflects on a character behind the sheet so there is a shadow when the room is darkened. (b) You might also read all the character descriptions in the first person: "I am . . ." Whatever you feel would be most effective for your group you ought to use.

## Character Presentations

### Ahasuerus or Xerxes

This is (or I am) King Ahasuerus, better known as Xerxes, king of the Persian empire from 486-465 B.C. You will find reference to this king in the book of Ezra (4:6) and Daniel (9:1). Xerxes was one of the most famous of ancient kings. He is also the king spoken of by the secular historians Herodotus and Plutarch. After this king had subdued Egypt, he set out to invade Greece with an army and a navy of great size and strength. He was a madman who beheaded his chief military engineers. He beat, with a stick, the Hellespont and laid iron fetters upon its waves. His counsels were perverse, and his orders were not right. (See Alexander Whyte, *Bible Characters*.) He was apparently a tyrant, and in his drunkenness he demanded of the queen something that he probably would not have demanded in his sobriety. Yet like every oriental despot he was capricious. One day he ordered the Jews killed, and next he

gave orders to them to defend themselves. He was probably greatly influenced by the opinions of others, for he sought to know what Haman thought of honoring a man who had been faithful to him. He was probably a sensuous man, for he had a large harem. In many ways he was probably no worse nor any better than the average run of Oriental kings. Yet God chose to use this sensuous, selfish, wicked man to preserve his own people from disaster (read *Psalms* 76:10).

### Vashti, the Queen

This is (I am) Queen Vashti. For many years this was the favorite wife of king Xerxes. She faithfully performed her duties in the palace as queen. However, the day came when Queen Vashti refused to obey the king. I suppose that this is not as startling to us in America as it was in Persia. In those days no wife ever disobeyed her husband. Further no subject ever, ever disobeyed the king. Vashti was both a wife and a subject.

However, picture the scene if you can. The king has had a drinking party with his friends for seven days. Now the order comes that the queen is to appear before the company unveiled. In oriental countries this was a disgrace. No sound thinking husband would have permitted such a thing. One can therefore understand the unwillingness of the queen to appear. In a very real way this was a virtue on her part. One ought not to think lightly of this act on the part of the queen. It cost her a great deal. She lost her place as the king's official wife, and her place was given to another. Notice now that we have seen how God used both the wickedness of Xerxes and the virtue of Vashti to further His purposes. From Vashti we ought to learn the lesson of a willingness to stand for our convictions. Purity must never be sacrificed for the whims and desires of others.

### Haman, the Enemy of Esther

This is Haman (I am) the enemy of Esther, the enemy of Mordecai, the enemy of the Jews, the enemy of God! Someone has said, "If the devil cannot conquer your spirit by making you compromise, he can do it by promotion." This was the case with Haman. We read of him, "After these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him" (Esther 3:1). The promotion of Haman produced pride and jealousy. Now he found himself

at the summit of success. As he rode through the city all men bowed down to him.

All men? Well, there was one who did not. Just one. One of all the hundreds and thousands in Shushan. Yet one was enough to prepare Haman for God's purpose. As God prepared a raven and a brook for Elijah and a great fish and a worm for Jonah, so here he prepared a Haman for destruction. See the gall of this man who is convinced that the king means him. There is no one the king would rather honor surely than Haman. He was also a man like Ahab who pouted when he did not get his way. He "hasted to his house mourning, and having his head covered" (Esther 6:12). It was because of Haman that a decree went out for the destruction of all Jews. Haman busily prepared the scaffold for Mordecai. It was he himself, however, who died upon it. No man can play fast and loose with God!

### Mordecai, Esther's Uncle

This is Mordecai (I am) the uncle and foster father of Esther. Mordecai was a Jew. This was a fact it might have been profitable for him to hide. Yet he felt a very real responsibility for the entire nation and conducted himself faithfully according to Jewish laws. Mordecai was a kind man. The fact that he took care of Esther from her infancy is token of his kindness. Further the Bible records that even after Esther was being considered for queen he was concerned for her. "And Mordecai walked every day before the court of the women's house, to know how Esther did, and what should become of her" (Esther 2:11.)

Mordecai was a religious man. Though everyone else bowed down to worship Haman, Mordecai refused to bow before any creature, probably remembering the commandment "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

Mordecai was also a concerned man. He knew that the decree against the Jews had been signed, and he therefore feared for the life of the entire nation. He did all that he possibly could to bring about their release. His dressing of himself in dust and ashes is simply illustrative of the length to which he would go to save his own people. Mordecai was a humble man. When the king decided to honor Mordecai and placed him on his own, we never read of a word spoken against Haman his enemy.

Further it is evident from the final greatness of Mordecai that he still sought the good of all the people. Yes, Mordecai was

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a great man. He was a man mightily used by God to the salvation of the Jews and thus also of the world!

#### Esther, the Queen

This is (I am) Esther, the deliverer of Israel. It is clear that Esther was a woman of small beginnings. She was not born into a great family. Her foster father, Mordecai, was a Jew. Hence, Esther was a Jewess. This is not a profound observation, but it is interesting to note that Esther, who was a member of a minority group, was greatly used by God because she was faithful.

Esther was a beautiful woman. Yet she was a kind woman. It is evident from the context of Chapter 2 that she obtained favor in the eyes of all who dealt with her. It is a great thing to be beautiful, but it is important to use even this gift properly. It is evident that Esther was a kind woman. When Mordecai was reported dressed in sackcloth and ashes, it greatly distressed her. She was not "disobedient to parents" as many in our day, but she showed proper respect to those who had cared for her.

It is clear that Esther was a courageous woman. According to the rule of the Oriental court it was not proper for the queen to present herself before the king without his direction. However, when the matter might have ended in her death, she nevertheless went in before the king. "If I perish, I perish!" She was also devout because she asked that the Jews fast and thus by implication pray on her behalf that she might be spared. She showed great tact and cleverness in her treatment of the enemy Haman. It is amazing how God used this girl to further the interests of His kingdom and to bring deliverance thus also to all men.

#### The Drama of Esther

A careful study of this book shows that the entire action of the book may be unfolded in several dramatic scenes.

The *first* scene is that of Ahasuerus and his compatriots in the palace at Shushan. The description of the palace and its appointments is very good. (See 1:5-7.) It was a typical Oriental banquet, no doubt. All the guests were drinking their fill. It was in the midst of the drunken reveling that the call went out for the queen. Queen Vashti, although an Oriental queen, probably had no higher morality than most of her friends. Yet this was too much. It is hard for us to imagine the wickedness of Ahasuerus at this point. However, it is to be remembered he was drunk, which is no excuse for his behavior, but it is a reason for his action. There follows an interesting discussion in which the husbands all express their fear of disobedience on the part of their wives (see 1:17). I wonder what would happen today in a similar situation in our modern world?

The *second* scene is the choosing of all the fair maidens in the kingdom to be brought before the king so that a choice may be made by him of another queen. Esther figures largely in this narrative. A careful study of chapter 2 reveals that

### Suggested Program

Pre-Prayer Service

Call to Worship

Song Service: *Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah; He Leadeth Me; Great Is Thy Faithfulness*

Sentence Prayers

Offering

Hymn: *Till I Become Like Thee*

Introduction of Topic

Character Studies

Discussion

Hymn: *My Saviour's Love*

Mizpah Benediction

Esther found favor in the court immediately. When we read this chapter we are reminded of Daniel and the three young men who also found favor in the king's house.

(Before you leave this scene have someone read verses 21-23 of chapter 2.) This small incident becomes very important to the narrative later on.

Scene *three* pictures Haman the Agagite. This man was exalted by the king. As a result of his elevation he becomes unbearable. He is pleased to see all men bow down before him. They give him honor. But there is one who refuses—Mordecai, the Jew. This one man becomes such a thorn in the flesh for Haman that instead of desiring the death of only Mordecai, he desires the death of all of Mordecai's people: the Jews. So Mordecai lays the matter out before the king, and the king permits the decree to be signed that the Jews should be slaughtered.

Scene *four* is the great scene of discovery and resolution. Esther notes that Mordecai is dressed in sackcloth and ashes. Esther sends to him all kinds of fine raiment, for his poor condition disturbs her. However, it is then she discovers to her horror that all her people, including herself, are under the sentence of death. Esther finds herself on the horns of a dilemma. If she does not go to the king to beg the life of her people, she will die with them. If she does go to the king without being called and the king does not desire her presence, she will die also. Thus, she says in 4:16, "If I perish, I perish." The great calling of Esther to save her people is found in verse 14, in which Mordecai poses the question, "And who knows whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

Scene *five* is that of Esther's brave entrance into the court of the king. It does not seem like a brave deed for us—a woman to appear before her husband unannounced—but in Oriental protocol it was indeed. The king had power of life and death, and since he was the kind of man that he was, who was to guess what he might do? It is interesting to observe the

good sense of Esther. Though she might have desired immediately to tell her story, she knew that the king might not yet be ready to listen, and so she invited the king and Haman to a banquet.

An interlude shows Haman very pleased with himself that he has been invited to a banquet *alone* with the king and the queen. But even this joy is crushed, for Mordecai still refuses to bow down. It is at this point that Haman's wife and his friends urge him to build a gallows so that Mordecai may be hanged on it.

Scene *six* takes place at night in the palace. King Ahasuerus cannot sleep and is searching the record. It is interesting to notice how God uses insomnia, in this instance, for His purpose. The king asks Haman what should be done for the man the king desires to honor. Of course, as far as Haman is concerned, he himself is the candidate. When Haman is called upon to honor Mordecai on behalf of the king, you can imagine the bitterness and hatred that well up in his own soul. He goes home thoroughly defeated, but he is reminded by his wife and friends that his day is still coming. The thought of revenge bolsters him up. Think of the tragedy and the bitterness that results from resentment.

Scene *seven* is the second banquet. Chapter 5 records the first banquet. However, Esther wants to be sure she has the king's individual attention; so a second banquet is spread. At the second banquet Esther dramatically presents the plight of her people to the king (see 7:3,4). Imagine the terrible fear that falls on Haman when his plot to destroy the Jewish people backfires! This scene ends with Haman hanging on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai.

The *final* scene deals with the final release of the Jewish people. They are permitted to defend themselves. What might have been a real tragedy becomes a triumph through the grace and direction of God.

#### Lessons from This Narrative

Throughout this story we have pointed to various lessons that may be learned. The greatest lesson of all is the providential care and direction of God. He cares for small and large details alike. It is also instructive to observe that He appoints men and women to His choosing to carry out His purposes. Esther the queen came to the kingdom in order to deliver her people. Who knows but that God may have appointed you for some great and important task! He can use anyone dedicated to His will.

#### Daily Bible Readings

M. Aug. 9	Another Queen Rejected	Esther 1:10-22
T. Aug. 10	Queen Candidates	Esther 2:1-14
W. Aug. 11	Esther Made Queen	Esther 2:15-20
T. Aug. 12	Esther Gains Favor	Esther 5:1-12
F. Aug. 13	Esther Accuses Haman	Esther 7:1-10
S. Aug. 14	Esther Pleads for Her People	Esther 8:1-6
Sun. Aug. 15—Topic: A Brave Queen		Esther 4:10-16

Comments by Dr. Jerome DeJong, minister of the Immanuel Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan

Topic 2 of a Unit: Bible Biographies

# A Devoted Friend

Ruth 1:5-18



## Introduction for the Leader

The topic this week, like last week's study of Esther, is concerned with an entire Bible book. We have here one central character, Ruth. In the study on Esther a dramatic presentation and a character study were suggested. It is obvious that you can also do character sketches in this book, such as of Ruth or Naomi, or Orpah or Boaz.

However, our purpose in this topic will be to help young people deal with the Bible directly. Give everyone a Bible, or better yet have everyone bring his Bible. This study of a typical Bible book will be helpful to the young people so they will understand how to deal with the Word of God.

## Introducing the Book

There are several questions we want to address to this book to determine its place in the Bible and to help us determine its purpose.

(1) *The place of the book:* In the Bible we possess Ruth is found among the historical books between Judges and I Samuel. This seems a good place to put it, since it is a book on history. The Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint; the Latin translation of the Bible, the Vulgate; and the Lutheran versions also place the book of Ruth here. In the Hebrew Bible the book is found in the last section: the law, the prophets and the writings.

(2) *The date of the book:* How do you suppose you date a Bible book? Read Ruth 1:1, and you will notice that the book was written after the period of the judges. Now read Ruth 4:7, and you will notice that the old customs practiced in the story of Ruth had now fallen into disuse. Read also 4:17, and it is clear that the book was written after the birth of David the king. With these clues most scholars believe that this book was written about 1000 B.C.

(3) *The author of the book:* Nowhere in the book do we find any reference to the author. For this reason we shall have to assume that the book is anonymous.

(4) *The purpose of the book:* The book, of course, tells a very interesting story. However, it is clear that one object of the

book is to trace the line of descendants for David. The book may also have as a purpose the teaching of a relationship between the Jews and the Gentiles.

## Outlining the Book

To make the outline as easy as possible we will construct it according to the chapters of the book: Chapter I. The Famine and the Subsequent Return; Chapter II. The Meeting of Ruth and Boaz; Chapter III. Ruth Obeys the Law of God; Chapter IV. The Marriage of Ruth and Boaz.

### I. The Famine and Subsequent Return

(*Read verses 1-5.*) The setting of the book of Ruth is in the days of the Judges. (*Ask those sitting about if they know who these judges were. Now read Judges 2:14-16.*) Some of the judges were Deborah, Gideon and Samson. This book stands as an interesting contrast to the book of Judges with its lawlessness and strife. In this story one feels the life the people really lived. The labor of men on the land, old country customs, love and marriage, the rearing of children, and simple faith in God went on behind the dreadful facade of cruelty and bloodshed.

There was a mighty famine in the land. Perhaps this famine was the direct result of the disobedience of the children of Israel. Notice again that God uses even a famine for the advancement of His purposes with His people.

Elimelech, the husband, and his wife Naomi go to the land of Moab with their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion. (*Look at your Bible map to locate Moab.*) Do you realize that the Moabites were distantly related to Israel? The account of the intrigues and sins of the daughters of Lot as recorded in Genesis 19 tells us that the Moabites were related to Israel. However, the Moabites were heathen. They worshiped the god Chemosh. This god was worshiped by child sacrifices, which were a terrible abomination to Jehovah.

The beginning of Naomi's sorrow is recorded in verse 3, in which we read of the death of her husband. Then her two sons married Orpah and Ruth. Do you suppose this was a source of grief to Naomi? Do

you think that the sons of Naomi had faithfully maintained their worship of the true God in Moab? Do you think that Ruth and Orpah were typical Moabites, in the sense that they also worshipped Chemosh, or do you suppose they had been led by their husbands to worship the true God? The Bible does not say, except that in 1:15 Ruth advised her daughters-in-law to return to the worship of their own gods. (*Now read Exodus 34:16, Deuteronomy 7:1-3, and II Corinthians 6:14.*) It is clear from all these passages that God forbids the marriage of believers and unbelievers. Do you think this still applies today? In view of the fact that Ruth became an ancestress of David, do you think that in this instance it was all right for this marriage to take place? Does the end ever justify the means?

Verse 5 tells of the multiplication of sorrows for Naomi. Then she lost her two sons as well. It was for this reason she called herself Mara (bitter). (*Read verses 6-18.*) No doubt Naomi kept in touch with affairs at home through travelers and traders who knew the fate of the surrounding nations. Hearing that the famine has ceased, Naomi decided to return home. Her love for her homeland and her own kindred was very great. We might learn a valuable lesson here with respect to the blessings of Christian fellowship and of the church. Does the church really mean so much to you that you would really miss it if it were to be taken away? Do you think you would be willing to sacrifice your job and business for the sake of the church?

Verses 7,8 present a tender scene. Naomi was about to leave for her home, and both Orpah and Ruth determined to go with her. It was immediately clear that the devotion of these daughters-in-law was extraordinary. This was their home! Here all their family, relatives and acquaintances lived. Here were their own parents. Yet the kindness of Naomi had been reflected in the lives of her daughters-in-law.

Verses 9-14 tell of Naomi's plea to her daughters-in-law that they return to their homes and kindred. Finally Orpah did so. How would you evaluate the action of Orpah? Was it good or bad? Do you think

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Orpah returned to her old way of life? Do you think there is a parallel here to Demas? (Read II Timothy 4:10.)

(Read verses 16-18.) The sixteenth verse is one of the most beautiful in this book. It ought to be realized that the testimony of Ruth was not a spur-of-the-moment affair. This represented an earnest desire on her part to do the will of God and to follow Him. There was a great deal of emotionalism manifested here as well as resolution. Do you think emotion is good in religion?

(Read verses 19-22.) Here we read of the sad return of Naomi to Bethlehem. She called herself Mara. Do you remember an incident when the children of Israel came to bitter waters on their journey to Canaan? (Read Exodus 15:23.) Do you think that verse 15 reflects bitterness against God, or do you believe that Naomi believed that this experience too, though bitter indeed, nonetheless came from God? Pause a moment and ask yourself, "Do I believe that God has a purpose for my life? Is this purpose all embracing?" (Read also Romans 8:28.) Can God use every experience of our lives to good advantage?

## II. The Meeting of Ruth and Boaz

(Read verses 1-3.) The practice of glean- ing the ears of grain that were left was an interesting practice in Israel. It was God's provision for the poor. (Read Leviticus 19:9.) These corners and gleanings were for the poor and the stranger. It would be profitable to consider that in God's system, although there was provision for the poor, they had to work to obtain it. You might ask if a give-away society is profitable for much. Notice too that verse 3 reads, "Her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging to Boaz." The word "hap" is an old English term which means "it so happened that." We must all be aware that this was no accident. God had providentially determined that Ruth should reap in the field of Boaz.

(Read verses 4-10.) The wonderful story of God's provision for his own people here begins to unfold. Boaz observed Ruth glean- ing in the field and was immediately attracted to this beautiful girl. Some of the beauty of this girl was surely revealed in her character—her willingness to do even menial tasks for the sustenance of herself and her mother-in-law. Note how Boaz promised to provide for her and protect her. The reaction of Ruth to this kindness (v.10) was spontaneous. She marveled at this kindness to her because she recognized herself to be a stranger. Do you suppose that in our church today people have a difficult time finding friendliness and acceptance because "they are not our kind"?

(Read verses 11,12.) The reputation of Ruth had preceded her. She had been kind to her mother-in-law. Her reputation of sacrifice had gone before. She did not, however, glory in it, but sweetly and obe-

diently followed the will of God. (Read verses 13-17.) Ruth received an extra hand- ful from Boaz. His young men left hand- fuls on purpose for her.

(Read verses 18-23.) When Ruth re- turned home from her daily task, her mother- in-law was aware that something very spe- cial had happened to her. She had gleaned far more than one could usually expect from this kind of procedure. Now Ruth revealed that the man was Boaz. He had been kind to Ruth, and through him Ruth had re- ceived a rich supply. Naomi realized that Boaz was related to them. He was called "our next kinsman" (verse 20). The origi- nal word used here means "to redeem," referring to redeemer or one who had the right to redeem. The use of the word by Naomi showed that she was already think- ing of Boaz as a possible redeemer of her family.

## III. Ruth Obeys the Law of God

In this chapter we are dealing with a subject very strange to the ears of all of us who live in this modern day. We must understand, however, that the incidents re- corded here root themselves in a very an- cient Jewish law (read Deuteronomy 25:5- 10). The concern in this law was that the Jewish ancestral lines should be continued. It would be a dishonor for a man if he should die without a son and his name should be forgotten. For that reason God decreed that if a man died without a son, his brother or his nearest relative should marry the widow in order that the dead man's name might go on.

(Read verses 1-5.) Naomi was aware of this law of the Old Testament. She was also anxious that the memory of her son should be perpetuated. She perhaps also felt a real sympathy for Ruth who was widowed so young. It was for these reasons she gave Ruth careful directions. Ruth was to lay herself at the feet of Boaz so that his attention might be directed to her and her need. What Ruth was about to do was perfectly proper and wholly upright and pure. A woman like this would not com- promise herself for any reason. Would you, young person? Would you be willing for selfish reasons to sell out your purity or innocence?

(Read verses 6-13.) Ruth obeyed her mother-in-law. This was not easy. Perhaps she, a stranger, wondered at this strange custom among the Hebrew people. Yet she obeyed because she trusted her benefactor. Boaz was greatly touched by the devotion of Ruth. Verse 10 gives a hint that Boaz was no longer a young man. Notice too in verse 11 that Ruth's reputation of chastity and virtue was known everywhere. What a good thing it is to have a reputation like this! What kind of a reputation do you have?

Verse 13 is a statement that may have come as a surprise to Ruth. There was a relative nearer than Boaz. Do you suppose Naomi knew this? Or do you think that

Naomi purposely chose this man, Boaz, be- cause she knew his kindness? (Read verses 14-18.) In the morning Ruth returned home with the good report of the kindness of Boaz. Now the recommendation of Naomi was: Wait and see!

## IV. The Marriage of Ruth and Boaz

In verses 1-5 we find another interesting and ancient custom. Boaz went to the gate before the elders the next day to perform the task of a next of kin. You will note that he first of all called the witnesses to- gether. Then he offered the nearer relative the opportunity to buy the land of Elime- lech. The next of kin agreed to buy it until he was told that with the land went the responsibility of being married to Ruth. This the nearest of kin claimed he could not do. There are some who think this was because the nearest of kin was already married, or perhaps it was because he did not want to spend his money on land that would never really be his. It would always belong to Ruth's sons.

(Read verses 9-12.) Now Boaz in the presence of all the elders declared his legal claim to Ruth and his right to marry her and thereby also to provide for the con- tinuance of the name of Mahlon. The elders wished him well, praying that he might be like Jacob fruitful before God with Leah and Rachel. (Read verses 13-17.) Ruth and Boaz were married. A child was born to this marriage. Notice that Naomi received praise and comfort from this birth. The testimony to Ruth in the entire book is repeated here in verse 15. Ruth is better than seven sons! The name of the child was Obed.

The beautiful love story in this book ought to be an inspiration to young people in our day to remember that marriage as God planned it is beautiful and desirable. To be pure and innocent is pleasing to God. The character of Ruth is one every young girl might well try to follow.

The story is not quite finished, however. (Read Matthew 1:5.) You notice that Ruth was the grandmother of King David. But what is even more wonderful—she found herself in the line of descent of the Saviour, Jesus Christ!

## Daily Bible Readings

M. Aug. 16	Ruth, A Young Widow of Moab	Ruth 1:1-5
T. Aug. 17	Ruth Accompanies Naomi	Ruth 1:19-22
W. Aug. 18	Ruth Gleans in the Fields of Boaz	Ruth 2:1-3
T. Aug. 19	Ruth Finds Favor with Boaz	Ruth 2:4-17
F. Aug. 20	Ruth Accepted in Israel	Ruth 4:9-12
S. Aug. 21	Ruth, Ancestor of Royal Seed	Ruth 4:13-17
Sun. Aug. 22—Topic: A Devoted Friend		Ruth 1:5-18

Comments by Dr. Jerome DeJong, minister of the Immanuel Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan

Topic 3 of a Unit: Bible Biographies

# Transformed Fishermen

Matthew 4:18-22

## Introducing the Topic

In this topic we want to trace the life and work of some of our Lord's disciples. We want to observe what they were and how they were changed by Jesus Christ and what the testimony of their lives really was. Begin by having someone read Matthew 4:19. We want to consider the implications of the calling of these men to be "fishers of men."

## Fishers

There will no doubt be some very avid fishermen in your group. Maybe you could have someone look up the topic of "fish" or "fishing" in a Bible dictionary. Have someone read Matthew 4:18-22, John 21:6, and Matthew 13:47,48. Before you continue with the topic ask those who have read the suggested passages what they have learned about Biblical fishing.

(1) Notice they went out in boats to fish. These were small simple crafts with a sail, no doubt. You will remember that on one occasion at least our Lord sat in a boat just a little way from shore while He was teaching the multitudes. It was in one of these small boats that Jesus fell asleep when they were crossing the sea. The raging of the waves showed that the danger of capsizing this small boat was great.

(2) They used nets to catch fish. The passages suggested show that the men spent time mending and drying these nets. At the command of Jesus they let the nets down into the sea to catch the fish.

(3) Part of the task of the fisherman was the sorting of the catch. They separated the good from the bad.

It ought to be remembered that fishermen were not at all wealthy. In fact, they barely managed a livelihood for themselves and their families. Those whom Jesus called from the ships were not men with great wealth. They needed to give careful thought to such a call, for how would they provide for themselves if they did not fish?

## Fishermen Called

We want to study these fishermen in more detail later. We are at present interested in their call to service. (Read again Matthew 4:18-22.) Was this the first meeting of Peter and Andrew with Jesus? If it was, how do you explain the immediate willingness on the part of Peter to follow Jesus? By this time you have probably guessed that there was a previous meeting. (Have someone read John 1:35-42.) You will note that Peter was first a disciple of John the Baptist. (By the way, who was John, and what did he do?) After Peter had observed and seen what Jesus was, he returned to his home and occupation. It was the second call we are interested in here in this passage. Now when Jesus called, Peter left all to follow Him.

The call of Andrew, Peter's brother, followed a similar pattern. It was Andrew who, according to John 1:41,42, first called his brother Peter and brought him to Jesus. Of the two brothers, which one would you say is better known? Of whom do we read the most in the Bible? Do you suppose that Andrew ever regretted having brought his brother to Jesus? Do you suppose he was ever jealous? What was the name of the man responsible for bringing Dwight L. Moody to Jesus Christ? Do you know? Ought we to be willing to be used to bring others to Jesus Christ?

Jesus also called James and John the sons of Zebedee to follow Him (Matthew 4:21). It is thought by most Bible scholars that the unidentified disciple in John 1:35,37,39 was John the beloved disciple. We shall talk more of him later.

## Fisherman's School

In Acts 4:13 the leaders of the Jews evaluated the disciples Peter and John as "unlearned and ignorant men" (translated in the Revised Standard Version "uneducated, common men"). The Sanhedrin considered them ignorant of all the fine points of Jewish law since they were only laymen. Do you think the disciples had any kind of training for their jobs as "fishers of men"? (Here read such passages as Matthew 5:2; 7:29; Mark 6:30,31; 10:1; 12:35; Luke 11:1; 19:47; 20:1; John 7:14,28; 8:2.) These references are only examples of the fact that Jesus taught the disciples daily. No Christian anywhere ever had a better teacher or went to a better school.

## Fisherman's Bait

What do you suppose it was that Jesus Christ gave to the disciples as bait in winning men to the Gospel? Here we can only use examples. However, read Acts 2:36,38; 3:19; 4:11,12; 5:29-33; 10:42-43. These are examples of the Gospel that Peter preached and, of course, all the other apostles as well. Attention is focused on the finished work of Jesus Christ, who gave himself for sinners and died for their salvation. They invite men to salvation and trust in Him. Do you think the content of the Gospel has changed? Do you believe that all men are still lost outside of Jesus Christ? It has been suggested by some people that the task of missions today is not so much "to tell others or to bring others" to Christ, but to believe that God is already working among all men.

## Fishing for Men

For just a few moments think about this. What do you think is the best way to approach men with the Gospel? How impor-



tant it is to be tactful and kind! Do you think it is ever proper to ask, "Brother, are you saved?" Before you quickly answer the question consider a brief anecdote. A certain man was standing along the street when another man approached him with the question "Are you saved?" The response of the gentleman was, "That, sir, is not any of your business." "Oh, yes," the man responded, "that is my business!" "Then," the gentleman answered, "you must be Dwight L. Moody." And he was!

## Results of Such Fishing

There are some illustrations in the Bible of those who were converted through the preaching of these fishermen. Acts 2:41 tells of 3,000. Acts 3:7-9 tells of the lame man. Acts 4:4 tells of 5,000. Acts 10:44ff. tells of Cornelius and other Gentiles converted by the preaching of the Gospel.

## You May Fish Men!

Before we proceed to any further study of the fishermen so greatly used by God, we ought to pause and consider that God has called us also to preach His Gospel. (Read Matthew 28:19,20 and Acts 1:8.) God has called us to what Peter, Andrew, James, and John did. We have a great many more advantages than the early disciples. We have good facilities for education and many additional methods to help us: literature, television, radio, etc. However, even though all this is useful and helpful to us we ought never to forget the call to preach the Gospel to the lost!

## Following the Footsteps of the Fishermen

We ought to be aware that everything that happens to us helps to shape our lives. There are many things that make an impression on your lives daily. This was certainly true in the case of the fishermen we are studying. Let us take all four and see where the Bible leads: Peter, Andrew, James and John. We will begin with the least known, Andrew and James, and proceed to the best known, Peter and John.

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#### Andrew

(Read again John 1:35-42, then Matthew 4:18, and also Matthew 10:2.) Everyone of us can tell about John or Peter, but perhaps we have difficulty remembering Andrew. It must be remembered that when Jesus sent out His disciples, Andrew was among them. He also returned and rejoiced that the devils were subject to him (Luke 10:17).

(Now read John 6:8,9.) What do you think this passage reveals about Andrew? Do you think Andrew was much different from the rest of the disciples? (Read also John 12:20-22.) What would you say this tells us about Andrew? Why did the Greeks address Philip in this instance? Would you say that Andrew helped direct someone to Christ? In Mark 13:3,4 Andrew appeared as an inquisitor concerning last things. The name of Andrew does not appear again specifically until Acts 1:13. From this point he dropped out of the record of the Bible.

(If you have time there are certain passages you ought to read that tell something about Andrew indirectly. If there is no time for such a study during your meeting have someone look them up in advance and briefly sketch what they imply about Andrew and, by implication, also James. See Matthew 17:16,17; Luke 22:14-18; 22:39-41; Matthew 26:56; John 20:19,26; Acts 1:2,3; Acts 2:4.)

Although the Bible tells us nothing at all about the subsequent life of Andrew, tradition has it that he preached in Scythia and suffered martyrdom, being crucified on an X-shaped cross, now called a St. Andrew's cross.

#### James, the Brother of John

The call of James to follow Jesus is found in Matthew 4:21. (See also Matthew 10:2.) James was a fisherman like the others. James was a part of the inner circle that went everywhere with Jesus. It was he who was present at the raising of the daughter of Jairus (see Mark 5:37). He was also present on the mount of transfiguration (see Matthew 17:1-8). He also went with Peter and John deeper into the garden of Gethsemane that he might be in the more intimate circle of support for the Saviour (see Matthew 26:37-45).

What, in your opinion, do these incidents tell us about James? James and his brother John were called Boanerges or sons of thunder. Why? (Read Mark 3:17 and the incident recorded in Luke 9:51-56.) From the narrative why would you say they received this nickname from Jesus? Do you think the name was appropriate? What would you have done in a similar situation? (Now read Mark 10:35-41 and also Matthew 20:20ff.) How would you explain this request on the part of the brothers sustained by their mother? Do you think James and John were earnestly seeking to do the will of God, or were they seeking a place of importance for themselves? Do you suppose

that their mother was overly ambitious? What does the reaction of the disciples reveal? Were they righteously indignant or just jealous? What did Jesus mean when He said, "Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with"? James was one of the disciples who asked Jesus about last things (see Mark 13:3). He is also specifically mentioned as being present at the sea of Galilee for one of our Lord's resurrection appearances (see John 21:1ff). His name is, of course, registered among the disciples in Acts 1:13. The final Biblical record about James is that of his death as recorded in Acts 12:2. Stop to consider a moment. God chose to be glorified in the death of James but in the continuing witness of Peter. Both are recorded in Acts 12. Could God have delivered James also?

#### Peter, the Rock

The life of Peter, the apostle, is written large on the pages of the New Testament. It would be almost impossible to list every reference. Therefore, we might take a brief survey of his life and ministry. Peter was from Bethsaida. With his brother Andrew he worked as a fisherman. They were probably partners of James and John. He was a married man, and at the time of our Lord's Galilean ministry he lived in Capernaum. (For his call read again Matthew 4:18 and John 1:40ff.) He was also of those chosen by Jesus (Matthew 10:2). In the lists of the twelve apostles Peter was always named first. His eminence among them was due to his being among the first chosen as well as to his aggressiveness as a natural leader. However, the apostolic group themselves did not accord Peter any preeminence. Jesus called him Cephas (John 1:42). The same idea is found in Matthew 16:18. By his confession in this controversial passage, Peter identified himself with Christ Jesus, the true Rock. He thus became a rock (Petros) and on this rock (petra) composed of Peter and the other apostles joined by faith to Christ, Jesus announced He would build the church.

Peter was the first to bring the Gospel to the Jews (Acts 2) and the first to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 10). Peter was also of the inner circle. He was present at the raising of the daughter of Jairus; he was present on the mount of transfiguration, and, incidentally, he made the only remarks recorded there (see Matthew 17:4). He was also present at the agony of our Lord in the garden. But when they all forsook him and fled, so did Peter. What does John 18:10 tell you about Peter? Even though Peter forsook the Saviour he nevertheless followed afar off. Then follows that interesting study in the betrayal of Jesus. (Read Luke 22:31-34; Matthew 26:35; Matthew 26:69-75.) There was a special resurrection appearance of our Lord to Peter, recorded in I Corinthians 15:5. The tender and matchless scene of John 21:15-17 is hard to equal. (If you want to conduct a Galilean service around the life of Peter you could take the scenes of his call: his confession, his denial, and his reinstatement.)

After the ascension of our Lord, it was Peter who led the disciple band at Pentecost (Acts 2). He and John healed the lame man (Acts 3). He exposed the sin of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5). He raised Dorcas (Acts 9) and preached to Cornelius (Acts 10). Tradition has it that Peter died a martyr under the hand of Nero.

#### John, the Beloved Disciple

The fact that John wrote the fourth Gospel makes him an acquaintance of all who have read it. In this Gospel John referred again and again to the fact that he was an eyewitness of our Lord's ministry and that he had written his Gospel that the reader "might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing he might have life through His name" (John 20:31).

John and his brother James were fishermen, the sons of Zebedee (see study under James). He was probably the unidentified disciple in John 1:35. (For his call note again Matthew 4:21,22 and 10:2.) During the course of the Lord's ministry the experiences of John were common to all the apostles. The Gospel makes clear that he was one of the most prominent of the apostles, and greatly loved by Jesus (e.g., John 20:2). He was also of the inner circle, and the experiences already recorded under Peter and James were his as well. John was present at the trial of Jesus and was well enough acquainted at the high priest's palace that he also gained admittance for Peter (see John 18:15,16). It was John who had asked the intimate question at the supper of the betrayer's identity, and although the Lord answered him it would seem that none of the disciples understood (John 13:21-28). John stood at the cross (see John 19:25-27).

John was with Peter at the healing of the lame man. He also went to Samaria with Peter (Acts 8). No doubt it was he of whom we read in Revelation 1:1,4,9, who was the prisoner on Patmos for Jesus' sake.

## Application

Do these men convince you that Jesus Christ also wants you to serve? If He could use these unlearned and ignorant fishermen, He can surely use us if we are willing to yield our lives to Him.

## Daily Bible Readings

M. Aug. 23	Peter's Confession	Matthew 16:13-18
T. Aug. 24	Peter's Denial	Mark 14:66-72
W. Aug. 25	Peter Preaches at Pentecost	Acts 2:32-40
T. Aug. 26	Peter Preaches to Gentiles	Acts 10:34-45
F. Aug. 27	Peter's Boldness	Acts 5:25-32
S. Aug. 28	Fishers of Men	Acts 4:1-13
Sun. Aug. 29	Topic: Transformed Fishermen	Matthew 4:18-22

Comments by Dr. Jerome DeJong, minister of the Immanuel Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan

# Topics

FOR SENIOR HIGHS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Topic 1 in a Unit: Investment of Time and Talents

## What Time Do You Have?

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

### Publicity Plans

It would be very appropriate to center all your publicity for this meeting around clocks. Prepare your posters with pictures of clocks on them, each one showing the hands of the clock set at a different hour. Also include another picture on each poster indicating something which is done at that hour. (*One clock might have its hands set at 12:00, while the accompanying picture shows a family seated around the dinner table.*) Each poster should contain an appropriate caption. "What are you doing with your time?" and "How can you use your time wisely?" and "What time do you have?" are a few examples of captions that might be used. Make sure that you include the time, date, and place of the meeting on each poster. An invitation to the meeting is also essential.

Send postcards to all members asking them to come prepared to discuss how they spend a typical day. Include a reminder that even during a vacation period they should find *time* for Christian Endeavor in their schedules. A phone call or personal visit to those who have been irregular in attendance during the summer months might encourage them to attend.

### Pre-Prayer Service

All Christian Endeavor meetings should be preceded by a pre-prayer service. This time will prove a source of strength for the leader as well as for all who are participating in the meeting.

### Leader's Preparation

It is always important for the leader to be prepared thoroughly for his meeting, and this one is no exception. Since this meeting deals with the proper use of time, the leader should be certain that he is prepared to make the best possible use of the time which has been allotted to him.

In order to involve as many people as possible in this meeting, the leader

might want to divide up the day into hours or time periods and assign each to a different person. Ask each one to come prepared to present suggestions as to how that time might be used to its best advantage. Be sure to make these assignments well in advance so that adequate preparation may be put into them. It also would be wise to meet with the persons involved several days prior to the meeting so that you will avoid duplication of ideas in the various presentations.

Make sure that all assignments are put into writing to avoid any misunderstandings and to serve as reminders for all who are participating in this meeting.

### Leader's Introduction

If the program has been well timed, the leader might have an alarm clock set to ring at the time the discussion

### Suggested Program

Pre-Prayer Service  
Call to Worship: Romans 13:11,12  
Hymn: *Give of Your Best to the Master*  
Opening Prayer  
Song Service: *Great Is Thy Faithfulness; Take My Life and Let It Be; More Like the Master*  
Announcements  
Special Music: *Only One Life* would be appropriate for this service  
Scripture: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8  
Sentence Prayers: Encourage a number of the members to take time to pray audibly at this point in the service  
Leader's Introduction  
Discussion Period  
Christian Witness: This is the *time* to give a testimony for Christ  
Offering  
Counselor's Comments  
Hymn: *I Need Thee Every Hour*  
Mizpah Benediction



period is scheduled to begin. When it rings one member of the group might be asked to give the correct time while the others set their watches accordingly.

The leader should then emphasize the significance which is placed upon time in the world today. Especially in this space age each person lives within the framework of time. Since, therefore, time is of such great importance to each of us, it is only fitting that the discussion period be used to evaluate the ways we spend our time and to see how we might make better use of it.

Pass out a sheet of paper and a pencil to each person present and ask him to make up a schedule showing how he spends a typical 24-hour day. Explain to the group that they should include everything that is regularly involved during this period. (*Since this topic is being discussed during the summer vacation, it should be decided beforehand whether the schedule is to be made for the school year or for the vacation time.*)

Explain to the group that no two schedules will necessarily be identical and that these are to be used only in assisting them during the discussion period. It is hoped that the schedules will prove valuable in helping each person evaluate how wisely he uses his time.

### Topic Development

There are many hours which are significant in the lives of young people. As we discuss ways in which young people use their time let us attempt to see how each one can receive the greatest benefit from wise use of his own time.

We should all recognize the fact that ultimately God controls the time clock of each of our lives and that in reality all time belongs to Him. It follows then that what we do with our time is not only important to us as individuals but also to our heavenly Father. Since we

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are stewards of the time which He has given us, we should realize the importance of using our time wisely so that we receive the greatest blessings from it.

Let us look at some illustrations of how we spend certain hours during a typical day.

**6:00 A.M.** This hour marks the start of a new day for us. It is important for each of us to get off on the "right foot" and start our day on schedule if we want it to be successful for us. We must not forget that it is God who has given us each new day in which to live and serve Him. This is a new day of opportunity for each of us if we are alert to its challenges. We should remember to give Him thanks for providing us with another day of life.

**7:00 A.M.** This hour should remind us that it is time to nourish our physical bodies. Each of us recognizes certain periods during the day that have been set aside to supply our physical needs. If we desire to keep healthy we realize that we must take the proper steps and follow the diet that will enable us to carry out our daily tasks.

Just as we depend upon food for the nourishment of our physical bodies, we must also remember that we need to feed our souls if we want our spiritual lives to grow properly. We need to set apart a time each day to receive the spiritual nourishment through prayer and Bible reading that will enable us to develop strong spiritual lives.

**9:00 A.M.** The next few hours will find us at school. Here it is important for us to be preparing daily for the life which is ahead of us. We should concentrate upon our lessons and try to develop our minds to the best of our ability so that we will be equipped to handle the tasks which will confront us later in life. It is necessary for us to be faithful in attendance, conscientious in our work, and alert to the things in the world about us if we are to get the most out of our school experiences.

This is also the time of life in which we are preparing ourselves to be of future service to our family, our society, and our God. We must not forget that God has called each of us as a Christian to serve Him in whatever occupation we decide upon for our life's work and that it is up to us to use all our abilities so that we may be thoroughly equipped to carry out the tasks which He has ahead for us.

**11:00 A.M.** This hour should remind us that this is the hour for worship on the Lord's Day. It is important for each Christian to set apart a time in which

### Discussion Questions

1. Is it a sin for a Christian to waste his time?
2. How might a Christian learn to make better use of his time?
3. Why should Christians be concerned about wise use of time?
4. Why is it necessary for a Christian to have a time for daily fellowship with God?

to worship. Worship is an important part of our Christian experience, and we will find that something is lacking in our own spiritual lives if we do not take time out to worship God in spirit and in truth.

**4:00 P.M.** We might label this period as a time for recreation. Now that our school day is over we need to take time for a period of relaxation. This might be the time we spend in the development of our physical bodies. It also serves to remind us that our bodies are a part of God's creation and that they are the temples in which His Holy Spirit dwells. We must not forget that it is our responsibility to keep our bodies physically strong and pure so that they may be used in service for Him.

**7:00 P.M.** This hour is a good time in which to have fellowship with our families. It is important for us to spend time each day to visit with our families, discuss the activities of the day, talk over our problems, and come to a better understanding and appreciation of each other.

It is also important for us to spend time in fellowship with our spiritual family (the body of believers in Jesus Christ) so that we are strengthened in our faith and receive encouragement in our own spiritual lives. Many times it is these hours spent in spiritual fellowship that give us the strength to sustain the trials and temptations that we are later called upon to face.

**8:00 P.M.** We certainly want to set apart some time in which we can prepare our studies for the following day. It is important for us to be thoroughly prepared for our classes if we are to get the most out of our schooling that we can. This provides a discipline for us that will be beneficial to us as we grow into adulthood and have many other tasks for which to prepare. Just as we must be prepared for our school lessons we must also be prepared for the lessons in life which sooner or later we will be called upon to face. We must be well disciplined in the things of the Spirit if our faith is to remain firm in the unsteady world about us.

**10:00 P.M.** Another day is ended, and now it is time for us to call it a day.

Our physical bodies need the hours ahead to be revived and refreshed for the experiences of a new day. This reminds us also that God has ordained a day of rest each week for us to be revived and refreshed for the days ahead. Spiritual rest occurs when we meditate upon the things of God and draw ourselves near to Him in fellowship. Through self-examination and spiritual enrichment during this period we prepare ourselves to face whatever experiences lie ahead for us.

### Buzz Groups

Have the members divide up into buzz groups and develop what they feel should be a well-rounded schedule for a 24-hour day. When they finish write these on a chalkboard. Have each person now compare the schedule he made at the beginning of the period with those on the board and see if he finds any need for improving the way he spends his time. It might be pointed out that we should continually be seeking ways to improve our daily schedules so that we can get the most efficient use of the time which God has provided us.

When selecting chairmen for these groups, try to select those who will be able to channel the discussion along the lines of the meeting and will keep the discussion proceeding in proper sequence.

### Counselor's Comments

Ask your counselor to summarize briefly the major points discussed in this meeting. He should stress that ultimately all of one's time as a Christian belongs to God. He should also point out that it is during this period of life that people develop the habits they will follow in later years, thus showing the group the necessity for making efficient use of their time now and giving God His rightful place in their lives.

If the leader does not stress the importance of the Quiet Hour the counselor should not overlook the opportunity provided by this topic to promote its value to the members of the society. He might take time to pass out pamphlets and explain how one can become a Comrade of the Quiet Hour. He might also wish to take time to provide an opportunity for the signing of this pledge.

### Daily Bible Readings

- M. July 26 When Time Began Genesis 1:1-5  
T. July 27 When Time Stood Still Joshua 10:12-14  
W. July 28 The Fullness of Time Galatians 4:1-7  
T. July 29 A Time for Work John 4:31-38  
F. July 30 A Time for Meditation Luke 22:39-46  
S. July 31 When Time Shall End Revelation 10:1-7  
Sun. Aug. 1—Topic: What Time Do You Have? Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Comments by Rev. David G. Jackson, director of men's activities at Huntington College, Huntington, Indiana

THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR WORLD

Topic 2 in a Unit: Investment of Time and Talents

# Investments and Dividends

Matthew 25:14-30

## Publicity Plans

During the summer months the best way to promote your Christian Endeavor meetings is through personal contact. If it is possible, contact by telephone or by a personal visit all the members of your society and encourage them to attend this meeting. Discuss the nature of the topic with them and ask them to come prepared to contribute to the discussion. Encourage them to bring a friend along to enjoy this meeting with them.

Don't forget to place posters in several prominent locations to publicize the meeting. Include the topic, time, date, and place as well as an invitation for all to attend.

## Leader's Preparation

If you plan to use the following skit, be sure to select the participants well in advance. It would be best to use the material given for the skit only as a basis for your skit and have the participants rephrase the comments to fit their own style of speaking and add more ideas of their own.

The group should practice the skit several times prior to the meeting so that they will feel free and natural in their presentation. Try to select people who feel at ease speaking before a group and who have some acting ability if possible.

As leader be thoroughly prepared and make sure that everyone taking part in the program knows exactly what his responsibility is.

## Leader's Introduction

God has given to each of us talents for our use. First, we must find out what these talents are, and then we must decide how we want to use them. As Christians we should desire to dedicate our talents, whatever they might be, to the Lord. We should then invest them wisely so that they will return the greatest possible dividends for Him.

The following skit will present a group of young people discussing how they in-



tend to use their talents in order to build a successful life. We hope this skit will stimulate your thinking as to how you might use your God-given talents.

## Skit: Investing Our Talents

**Bob:** It hardly seems possible that it's nearly time for school to begin again. Here it is my senior year, and I still haven't decided what I want to become. My parents keep asking me how I plan to invest my life and my talents, but I'm really not sure what I should do. I know I want to invest my time and talents in something worthwhile, but I just haven't been able to discover what it is. How do the rest of you plan to invest your lives?

**Carol:** I'm sure my greatest talent lies in the field of music. In fact, my voice teacher wants me to study to become an opera singer. I'm really not interested in that though. It's so hard to become famous in the field of opera unless you spend years and years in study. Even after all that time you're still not certain of success. You have to get the right breaks if you ever really expect to get anywhere.

I'm much rather sing pop songs. It's so much easier, and all you really need is one hit record and you have it made. Imagine hearing your own records played on all the radio stations and having singing dates all over the country. I'd say that is really investing your talent so that it would reap great dividends. I'd really feel that I'd made a success of my life if I can become a famous singer.

## Suggested Program

Call to Worship: Galatians 6:7,8

Opening Prayer

Hymns: *Living for Jesus; Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus; I Love to Tell The Story*

Announcements

Scripture: Matthew 25:14-30

Prayer Hymn: *Sweet Hour of Prayer*

Sentence Prayers

Offering

Solo: *What Shall I Give Thee, Master?*

Leader's Introduction

Skit: Investing Our Talents

Summary and Discussion Period

Counselor's Moments

Hymn: *Have Thine Own Way, Lord*

Mizpah Benediction

**John:** I agree that being famous can be one mark of success, but I don't feel that it's the best way for me to invest my talents. There's too much risk involved. Fame is much too unpredictable unless it brings you security also. You can have all the fame you want, but let something happen to you and see how far your fame will get you. You'll find out who your friends really are. See if they're around then to give you a helping hand. While you're on top everybody's your friend, but once you fall nobody remembers you.

I think my talent lies in the business field. I've always been interested in industry and commerce, and I just seem to have the knack of making money. I think I'll invest a good share of my earnings in stocks and bonds—the dividends you receive from them are the kind that I want to get. Then I'll be able to take care of myself. No depending on the other fellow.

Oh, I know it will take a lot of hard work, but I'm prepared for that. In the end I'll come out on top, and that's what's really important. People really respect someone who makes a success in the business world. I'm sure that I'll be reaping more than enough dividends from my investment.

**Mary:** It seems as though each of us has a different talent. I've always felt that mine must lie in education, since I enjoy the challenges that come from investigation, research, and other fields of scholarship.

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For years I've heard my parents talking about the value of a good education and what they missed by not having a college education. I'd feel that it was a waste of the good mind that I am fortunate to have if I didn't pursue my education.

I've always felt that there was just as great a danger in staking everything on fortune as there is in putting it on fame. There's a big hazard in depending too heavily on financial investments. In the past people have felt that they had enough security to last them for their lifetimes, but they found out that the stock market and the financial world were not as predictable as they thought. I doubt that anyone can be certain that this won't happen again.

It seems to me that it's the well-educated people in our country who are really respected. That's all you hear people talking about these days—the importance of a good education. I find that it's those who have invested in a good education that get the jobs that have security attached to them. Over the period of a lifetime that's what really counts.

Maybe it takes longer to reap the dividends from a good education, but it will be well worth it when I see that Ph.D. written after my name. I'm convinced that a good education will bring the success in life that I'm seeking and also will produce dividends that far exceed the original investment.

*Tom:* I know I don't have the talents that the rest of you have, and sometimes I'm thankful for that. All of you are willing to work yourselves to death for success, and what will it get you anyway? A few ulcers maybe or a nervous breakdown. That's what's wrong with our society today. Everybody's working so hard to succeed that they're not fit to live with while they're doing it. Work, work, work and have everything you need when you're ready to retire. At that rate I doubt if any of you will live long enough to enjoy days of retirement.

I'm going to invest in having a good time in life. Make enough to live on and invest the rest in the pleasures of life. My dividends will come from the fishing trips, ball games, golf matches, and bowling parties that I'll be enjoying. For me to be a success in life means to enjoy every minute of it that you can. That's what I intend to do. I'll be reaping the dividends from my investments as I go along, and then I'll be certain that I'm here to receive my dividends.

### Discussion Questions

1. How can we plan our own lives to receive the greatest dividends from them?
2. Why is it wrong to invest our talents only for our own benefit?
3. What blessings will we receive if we invest our talents for the Lord?

*Bob:* I really appreciate all that you kids have had to say about success and how you intend to invest your lives. It's interesting to me that no two of you have agreed upon what success really is and how you obtain it.

I wish I could be as certain as each of you as to what success really is. But somehow even after all you have said I still feel that there should be greater and more permanent dividends from the investment of a life. That is what really has been bothering me.

I think it all goes back to the night we signed the Christian Endeavor Pledge together. Remember what we said? "I promise Him that I will strive to do whatever He would like to have me do." Now don't get me wrong—I don't feel that means we all have to enter some field of full-time Christian service if we want to be a success in life. What I'm saying is that in whatever way we invest our lives we should be sure that it is the occupation that Jesus Christ would want us to enter. What I really think He wants is for us to dedicate our talents to Him, and then however we invest them He will see that we reap eternal dividends.

### Summary

This is a good place to break into the conversation. I'm sure we've all heard enough about the plans and ideas of these young people to discuss among ourselves how we might best invest our lives so that the greatest possible dividends will be gleaned from them.

First, let us recall what our Lord Himself had to say about investing the talents which He gave us. We have already read the parable about the servants who were given one, two, and five talents (Matthew 25:14-30). This Scripture tells us that our talents have been given to us to be invested for the glory of the Lord. It is our responsibility to see that they are invested wisely so that they will produce dividends.

All of us are not endowed with the same talents or abilities to invest for

the Lord. But each of us has certain talents which he or she can dedicate to Him. If we invest these talents properly, they can bring rich dividends for Jesus Christ. So it is up to us individually to examine our own lives, discover what talents and abilities we have, and then invest them in endeavors which will reap the dividends that will honor and glorify the Lord.

God has not called all His children into the Christian ministry, missionary work, or some other form of what we commonly call full-time Christian service. All of us do not have talents which lie in these areas. But He has called all of His children to dedicate their time and talents to Him to be used in whatever way they can to promote His kingdom here upon earth. It is not the occupation we have in life that is so important, but the way that we invest the talents that God has given to us for our use that really counts.

If we could turn the clock ahead 40 or 50 years, it would be interesting to see which of the young people in our skit really received the dividends from their investments. But we can plan our own lives so that the Lord may receive rich dividends from the investments that we make.

### Counselor's Moments

These few closing moments can be of great benefit for the entire society. Stress the fact that it is foolish to invest God-given talents in selfish pursuits that will bring dividends only for self. Make the young people aware that nearly any occupation or profession will be honorable provided that one's talents and abilities are dedicated to the honor and glory of the Lord.

A few moments might be allotted for silent prayer at the conclusion to give each one an opportunity to dedicate whatever talents and abilities he might have to the Lord.

### Daily Bible Readings

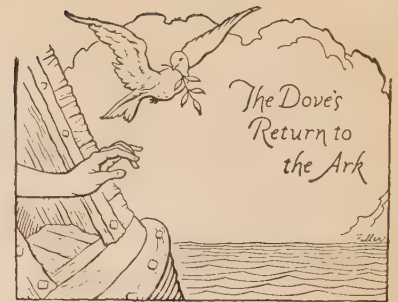
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|-------------|---|----------------------|
| M. Aug. 2   | Solomon Seeks Wisdom                                | I Kings 3:5-14       |
| T. Aug. 3   | Solomon's Downfall                                  | I Kings 11:1-13      |
| W. Aug. 4   | The Vanity of Riches                                | Ecclesiastes 5:9-17  |
| T. Aug. 5   | The Vanity of Pleasure                              | Ecclesiastes 5:18-20 |
| F. Aug. 6   | Nothing for the Soul                                | Luke 12:16-21        |
| S. Aug. 7   | We'll Reap What We Sow                              | Galatians 6:3-10     |
| Sun. Aug. 8 | Topic—Investments and Dividends<br>Matthew 25:14-30 |                      |

Comments by Rev. David G. Jackson, director of men's activities at Huntington College, Huntington, Indiana

Topic 1 of a Unit: Bible Biographies

# Following God's Directions

Genesis 6:13-22



## For Publicity

Secure a discarded blueprint sheet, and letter across it the time, place, group, leader, etc. on a white sheet superimposed on the blueprint. Or place a ship model on display, together with the directions for construction, with a sign with such a headline as *God's Directions for You* and the data concerning the service.

Also, do not neglect the other means of advertising—the church bulletin, a spot announcement in the Sunday school opening service, and the midweek service. Perhaps a local newspaper will carry your meeting notice, or a poster on the school bulletin board may be permitted. Don't forget the lowly postal card—send one to each member and prospect. Call by phone each member and prospect on Saturday (if you meet on Sunday) to remind him or her of the meeting, telling of plans and urging attendance. Remind each one also of the part he is to have. You may need the lookout committee to help in this chore.

## To the Leader

We are in the midst of summer. Many churches are afflicted about this time of the year by the "summer slump." Resolve that this meeting will be a good one! If some members are away on vacation, you can't get them home for the meeting perhaps, but you can yourself be so enthusiastic and your meeting so well prepared and interesting that the ones who can come will be there, and they will be spiritually fed.

To insure as good an attendance as possible, use as many young people as possible in the program. Give each one a job. Assign not only the four talks for a short message well in advance (*at least a week—better two*), but also make sure that the two girls who will sing, their accompanist, the one who will lead in prayer, the music director, and each person who has any part will know of his or her part at least a week in advance. This will demand early preparation yourself. Your plans should be laid two to three weeks ahead.

The Scripture lesson is from a portion of God's Word that has been the object of scorn by unbelievers, and the subject of some disagreement by Bible teachers. You may have those in attendance who might like to spend the time discussing the merits of theories or simply airing their own ideas about some of these differences of opinion. Keep in mind that your topic is *Following God's Directions*. Your purpose is not to settle any disputes over what is the actual meaning of a passage that Bible teachers have not agreed upon. Keep the discussion to the point, and make sure that the talks which you have given to different individuals will be handled reverently and with conclusions which are true to the Scriptures. Your pastor or a consecrated layman may be able to help if problems do arise in preparation of this topic. Above all, prepare well and thoroughly and pray for your meeting,

## Suggested Program

Pre-Prayer Service

Call to Worship: "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18).

Opening Hymn: *Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah or Lead On, O King Eternal*

Invocation

Hymns: *I'll Go Where You Want Me to Go; In the Service of the King; O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee*

Announcements and Offering

Scripture Reading: Genesis 6:13-22

Girl's Duet: *Where He Leads Me*

Leader's Introduction

Talks on the Topic

Leader's Conclusion

Hymn: *Living for Jesus*

Sentence Prayers

Benediction

that it may be God-honoring and helpful to each one present.

Feel free to change the program to fit your own particular group or to take advantage of special talent or to supply a special need.

## Leader's Talk

Noah is included in the Westminster Abbey of Faith (Hebrews 11:7): "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."

The Lord Jesus Christ referred to Noah's experience in the ark as factual (Matthew 24:37-39; Luke 17:26,27).

Noah believed God. Then follows the called-for next step, Noah *obeyed* God. It is unthinkable that one should believe God, and not obey Him.

Noah followed God's directions.

1. God's directions to Noah were evident. Our lesson begins simply: "And God said unto Noah . . ." We do not know the exact way by which God spoke to Noah. God may have spoken to him in an audible voice. He may have appeared to Noah in a vision or a dream, as he did to Abraham, to Jacob, and to others.

But we do know that God's directions to Noah were plain, and that God's directions to us now are also plain in the Scriptures. We may not know the details of the plans for the ark, or what is the exact identity of "gopher wood," but we do know God's directions for our lives. Every Christian has been called to serve God. The directions are plain. God's service comes first. General directions are complete in our Bibles, and most specific directions are there if we will heed them. God's blueprints are plain.

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2. But God's directions to Noah were unpopular. The "earth was filled with violence"; it was corrupt. Noah and his family alone were right with God. It became necessary, in justice, for God to destroy the wickedness of man. But Noah and his family were people of faith. Therefore, God purposed through Noah to continue man upon the earth, and Noah "found grace in the eyes of the Lord."

And while Noah prepared the ark according to God's direction, he preached (cf. *I Peter 3:20 and II Peter 2:5*). It is not hard to guess that the preaching of Noah was not only unwelcomed, but that it was also the subject of derision. No doubt Noah was thought to be a fool, a "crackpot," and a religious fanatic.

3. God's directions did seem unreasonable. Probably the ark was built far up on dry land, perhaps even a great distance from water. No one thought then that there would ever be enough water to float it.

Some people today try to make fun of Noah and the ark. But an interesting study was made some years ago by the distinguished archaeologist, Dr. George Frederick Wright, on the dimensions of the ark. Applying the cubit measure of 22.5 inches to the dimensions of the ark, the overall length becomes 562.5 feet, the breadth of beam 93.75 feet, and the depth 56.25 feet. Comparing these figures to the dimensions of several steamers in regular service a few years ago, we note the following table:

Name of Ship	Length	Breadth	Depth
Noah's Ark	562.5	93.75	56.25
Caledonia	550	70	42.7
G. H. Smith	550.6	72.3	44.1
Svealand	561	72	44

We are told that one modern steamship was actually and knowingly built on the exact dimensions of the ark! The proportions, we are told, are most significant. Certainly, the engineering of these dimensions of Noah's ark was beyond mere chance or coincidence. No other vessel of anything like these dimensions was known to the ancient world, nor have any such been built until very recent times. Either God's handiwork is evident, or there is some exceedingly strange guesswork!

God's directions may seem unreasonable, but actually they are not.

4. Above all, God's directions are just. God found it necessary to bring judg-

ment on the earth. Man's wickedness was too great to allow it to go unpunished. The Bible makes it plain that the flood was a judgment of God. But God tempered justice with mercy, and in grace brought about a means of salvation for Noah and his family. In it all God never directed Noah to do a single deed that was anything but just and righteous.

5. Finally, God's directions brought ultimate good. The end result was a new start for man. It was another beginning with a righteous family. "And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth" (Genesis 9:1).

## Talks on the Topic

1. *Evangelism.* God's directions for evangelism are plainly stated by our risen Lord in Matthew 28:19,20. The first imperative is in the words "go ye." It is addressed to every one of them; indeed, every follower of Christ Jesus is charged. The word "therefore" is crucial. It is because of His finished work on Calvary and His resurrection and ascension that we have a message to proclaim. This is our message. We are to "teach," and this message is the subject of our teaching.

Again, it is to "all nations." Strangely, many of us with opportunities presently limited think only of the far-flung heathen tribes—remember, "all nations" includes my own home town and my own school campus. Our strength is the presence of Christ Himself. He has promised to be with us "always, even unto the end of the age."

Evangelism means telling the story of Christ Jesus and His love. Each of us is charged with this lifelong responsibility.

2. *Brotherhood.* God's directions for brotherhood are often misunderstood or misquoted. In John 13:34 our Lord, in the upper room discourse to His disciples, made plain their resources and obligations after the Cross. Here also are our marching orders. He commands us to love one another. But the "one another" that we are to love as brothers are plainly other Christians, who are also members, by the new birth, of the family of God.

Though the Bible speaks of all men as created by God, it does not speak of all men as children of God. Men become children of God only when they receive the life of God, the Saviour,

Jesus Christ. Our commission is to win others to Christ, that they also may know His love. The moving and glorious truth is that God loves the whole world: "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). A man won to Jesus Christ becomes, then, the special object of our love, as a "brother in Christ."

3. *Prayer.* God's directions for Christian prayer are both far-reaching and precise. In John 14:13 our Lord explains to His children that to ask in His name (that is, through His very Person) is now the privilege of His child. Because of the Cross, the Christian is said to be "in Christ"—the Christian's standing and destiny are that of Christ. Therefore, God the Father will honor the request of the child of God as He would honor the request of His own Son!

This glorious standing was never granted before the Cross (John 16:24), and it is not for the world, but only for the child of God (John 15:18,19). How can a person who rejects the Son of God presume to ask God for anything (John 3:36)? Indeed, only the child of God who is "abiding in Christ" in daily life (John 15:7) can claim this intimate advantage of effectual prayer.

4. *Lifework.* The wise man realized that anyone who will come to God in sincere committal of heart and life will be directed of Him: "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:6). To acknowledge God certainly means first of all honoring Jesus Christ in belief unto salvation (John 3:16). Then the promises of Christ to one who thus becomes related to God through Christ assure complete direction, first through the Scriptures (John 14:26), and in minute detail through the leading of the Holy Spirit of God (John 14:16,17; 16:12-15).

## Daily Bible Readings

M. Aug. 9	The Days of Noah	Genesis 6:1-12
T. Aug. 10	The Occupants of the Ark	Genesis 7:1-16
W. Aug. 11	God Cares for Noah	Genesis 8:1-5
T. Aug. 12	The Waters Abate	Genesis 8:6-19
F. Aug. 13	Noah Worships God	Genesis 8:20-22
S. Aug. 14	God's Covenant with Noah	Genesis 9:8-17
Sun. Aug. 15—Topic:	Following God's Directions	Genesis 6:13-22

Comments by Dr. Elias D. White, pastor of the First Brethren Church, La Verne, California

THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR WORLD

## One Moment, Please!

## Topic 2 in a Unit: Bible Biographies

Why are you leading this meeting this week? Did you volunteer? Your turn? Forced into it? If you are leading "just because I have to," then how can you do a good job? As you prepare your meeting, keep this goal in mind: "How can this meeting teach our society more about Christian living?"

# An Ambitious Youth

II Samuel 15:1-6

## Getting Ready for the Meeting

1. *Use as many young people as possible!* Try to spread around the jobs in this program so that everyone who would like to participate can do so. Remember ushers, songbook distributors, pianist, song leader, someone to open sentence prayers, someone to close, speakers, special music, etc.

2. *Have these persons prepared!* By 6:30 p.m. on Saturday night every person on your program should know exactly what he is to do for tomorrow's meeting. Consider songs to sing, who will open the prayers, who will hand out the songbooks, etc. Preparation—there is absolutely no substitute for it. Nor is there any possible excuse for lack of it!

3. *Publicize!* You should make absolutely certain that every person in your Sunday school that is of Senior High age knows the topic, leader, time, and place for this meeting. How can you expect them to attend unless they know about the meeting?



David became king over the southern section of Palestine, called Judah. Later David was to become king over the entire country of Judah and Israel.

Absalom's mother was named Maacah, and she was a princess. Her father was Talmi, the king of the region of Geshur. So Absalom was truly of royal blood, being the grandson of one king and the son of another king.

Absalom was a very handsome man. He was the best-looking man in the

country, and he was very popular with the people. He was a leader, a very intelligent person, and he had the promise of a very bright future.

Look at some of the advantages that Absalom had. He was rich. His father was the king. He had the finest clothing, and he went to the best schools, or whatever their counterpart was in that day. Absalom had almost everything that could be asked. Yet he lived a very foolish life.

While he was still a young man, he became involved in a family quarrel over his sister Tamar and, as a result, he had his brother knifed to death. It was a vicious, deliberate murder.

After the killing, Absalom ran and hid for three years with his mother's people in Geshur. Even when he returned home, his father was so bitter that for a long time David would not speak with Absalom.

Then Absalom planned to overthrow his father as king and to become king himself. For years and years he lied about his father, told the people that he would make a better king, and deliberately turned the people against his father. The Bible says that Absalom "stole the hearts of the people."

When Absalom saw that the time was right, he announced that he was king, and his father, King David, had to flee Jerusalem. Here the old King David was forced from his throne and made to run to the wilderness to keep his own son from murdering him.

Even so, David tried to be merciful to his evil son. As the two armies, Absalom's army and David's army, began to prepare for battle, David instructed his generals to be merciful and gentle with Absalom.

The battle began. Absalom's army began to fail. His soldiers retreated. Many were killed. Absalom decided to flee for his life. He spurred his mule, turning him away from the battle scene, and toward a dense thicket of trees. But

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## Leader's Introduction

What do you want to do with your life? What career have you chosen? Or, if you have not yet made up your mind, what career are you considering?

What do you hope to get out of life? Health? Fame? A lot of money? Power? Happiness?

Our ambitions are very important to us. What we want to do in life determines what we will try to do—and so our ambitions guide the direction of our lives.

Tonight we meet a very ambitious man named Absalom.

## Speaker Number One

(How much better it would be if this section were not read word for word, but studied, and the facts contained here were told in the speaker's own words!)

Absalom was the name of the third son of David. He was born just after

## Planning Outline

*Time to Sing:* He Keeps Me Singing; In the Service of the King; Blessed Assurance; I Would Be True

*Time to Pray:* Sing Have Thine Own Way, Lord, and then have sentence prayers

*Time to Share:* Offering

*Time to Remember:* Announcements by the president

*Time to Read God's Word:* II Samuel: 15:1-6

*Time for Leader's Introduction*

*Time for Speaker #1*

*Time for Speaker #2*

*Time for Speaker #3*

*Time for Discussion*

*Time to Close:* Read the Christian Endeavor Pledge and use the Christian Endeavor Benediction as a closing prayer.

(Continued from previous page)

he failed to watch where he was going. The animal ran under a low branch, and Absalom's hair and neck became wedged in the fork of a low branch.

When David's Captain Joab came and found Absalom hanging there, he took a spear and stabbed Absalom repeatedly until he died.

When Absalom was dead, they cut down his lifeless body, threw it into the ditch, and piled a heap of stones upon it.

## Speaker Number Two

Absalom made many mistakes. One of the worst mistakes that he made was this: he refused to be thankful for the blessings that he had.

Look at the advantages that Absalom had. We read that he was the son of a king, that he was rich, that he was popular, that he had fine clothes, that he had good education, and on and on. But he was never satisfied.

Rather than be contented with his blessings, he wanted more. He wanted more than his own wealth; he tried to take his father David's kingdom. Not grateful for his popularity, he tried to become the dictator over the whole country. We do not find any indication that he respected his parents at all. Rather, he was jealous of his own father and tried to kill him.

Absalom was dishonest. He was a liar. While he was trying to formulate the plot to overthrow his father, he made all sorts of "campaign promises" that he never intended to keep. He was lying, lying in order to gain his own selfish goals.

And Absalom was jealous and resentful. For two years he had hated Amnon, his older brother. Absalom not only hated Amnon, but he also thought out a scheme whereby he could have Amnon murdered. He used trickery and deceit. He lured Amnon away from home on a false pretense, and he took him into a lonely place and saw to it that Amnon became drunk. When Amnon was too drunk to defend himself, then Absalom and his friends stabbed Amnon again and again until he died.

We can see the bitterness of this hatred when we remember that Absalom had planned this for two whole years.

The death of Absalom was a tragic failure too. Absalom was so vain that he had designed and had built an elaborate tomb. This pillar of stone was several feet high. Absalom planned to

## Discussion Time

1. Can a person serve Christ no matter what career he chooses? Can you name a career that would make it impossible to be a Christian?
2. Which is more important, being a minister or being a mechanic? (Counselor, the idea is that each must fill his own niche. Use this question as such a springboard.)
3. Discuss this: all riches are evil and sinful; all ambition is bad and to be shunned. True or false?

be buried there so that everyone would see the monument and know what a great man he was. But Absalom's body was thrown into the ditch and covered with a mound of stones. He did not get to use his fine monument after all.

## Speaker Number Three

We can learn many lessons from foolish Absalom. Especially as we think of our career and what we want from life, we can learn from him.

Absalom teaches us that looks are not everything. Neither are position, or popularity, or clothing, or education. These things which often seem so important are not the most important things in life after all! Absalom failed to serve God. Because he failed to do this, all the good things of his life did not count for anything.

Absalom shows the foolishness of jealousy and the bitterness of resentment. Do you ever have thoughts of jealousy arise in your heart as you think of others who have more money, or clothes, or popularity than you seem to have? Or do you ever resent the discipline of your parents, or schoolteachers, or of the band director, or coach? Absalom found that jealousy and resentment lead down a dead-end road.

The most outstanding lesson that we can learn from Absalom is this: the tragic failure of what might have been.

He could have been such a good person. He could have been, as his father David was, a man after God's own heart. He could have been an important official in the government under his father. He could have been the leader of David's army, or perhaps Absalom could even have been the next king!

But no—he threw away all of these possibilities just to advance his own selfish ambition.

How about yourself? What can you do? What can you be? Could you be a

leader? What kind of a leader would you be? When people are with you, are they better or worse than they are when they are with others? Absalom was a leader—but he led his friends into defeat and death because of his sin.

What are your talents? Music? Drama? Speaking ability? Sewing? Study? Working with your hands? Do you know that each of these talents can be used in God's service? As far as we know, Absalom's life was spent selfishly, with no thought for anyone else. We know of no good thing that he ever did for someone else. What about yourself?

What about your future? Are you making your plans selfishly? Are you—and think, now—are you out to make all of the money that you can make? Or to become famous no matter what the price? Or to seek a life of pleasure and ease? Absalom failed with his life. We dare not follow his foolish example.

Comments by Roderick E. Huron of Steubenville, Ohio

## Daily Bible Readings

- M. Aug. 16 Absalom Slays His Brother II Samuel 13:21-36  
T. Aug. 17 Absalom's Beauty II Samuel 14:25-27  
W. Aug. 18 Absalom Forms a Conspiracy II Samuel 15:10-23  
T. Aug. 19 Absalom Follows Evil Counsel II Samuel 16:20-23  
F. Aug. 20 Absalom's Defeat Planned II Samuel 18:1-5  
S. Aug. 21 Absalom Slain in Battle II Samuel 18:9-17  
Sun. Aug. 22—Topic: An Ambitious Youth II Samuel 15:1-6



Roderick E. Huron is a new Senior High-Young People's topic writer. He is minister of the La Belle View Church of Christ, Steubenville, Ohio. Mr. Huron is married and has two children. He received his A.B. degree from Kentucky Christian College and is presently doing work at the University of Pittsburgh toward a master of religious education degree. Mr. Huron is active in the Ohio Christian Endeavor Union. He is a writer of Bible lessons for Standard Publishing.

Hymns listed in program outlines in THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR WORLD have been selected from the new CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR SONGS. This book, with an attractive orange and black krome-kote cover, contains 138 songs and hymns and 20 responsive Scripture readings for youth meetings. Available from International Society of Christian Endeavor, 1221 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43216. Price: 60c each, \$6 per dozen, \$48 per hundred.

## Topic 3 in a Unit: Bible Biographies

# Reaping God's Rewards

II Timothy 4:6-8

## Our Aims

1. To study carefully the Word of God regarding the rewards of the righteous.
2. To discover the difference between grace and rewards.
3. To examine the works we do and the rewards we shall receive.

## Publicity

Fix a table with trophies upon it indicating the rewards of victory. Prepare a poster for your bulletin board showing runners facing the tape and the reward to be gained. Make the rewards stand out. Be sure to indicate the time, place, and topic.

## To the Leader

You have a very exciting topic for consideration. You must invest some of your time to check the Scriptures in order to be better prepared. To get ready check the following:

- A. The fact of rewards (Revelation 22:12).
- B. Acts to be rewarded (II Corinthians 5:10).
- C. Rewarded according to works (I Corinthians 3:8).
- D. Rewarded when Christ comes (Revelation 22:12).
- E. Rewards may be lost (I Corinthians 9:27).
- F. Rewards our inspiration (John 4:36).

You will have a wonderful opportunity to stress the rich values of investing time in the building of your own Christian Endeavor society. Each member will reap a deep sense of satisfaction when he sees the work of the society grow. Try to find out if the committee work of your society is a rewarding experience. Be ready to offer some suggestions that will help your committee members to strive to do a good job for Christ and His Church. Tell them that they will not have to wait until they get to heaven to be rewarded, but that they will be rewarded here and now as they see their society reach out to larger fields.

You can stress the fact that in the Word of God the lively members of

God's Church are referred to as fruitful trees, fruitful vines, and seasonable saplings planted by the rivers of waters. Therefore, all of God's people are eligible to bring forth fruit, yea, much fruit. When we stand before the throne of Christ, we are to be rewarded not according to our good intentions and our holy ambitions and our large promises, but we are to be rewarded strictly upon the basis of our accomplishments for Christ and His Church.

## Leader's Presentation

Today we think about God's rewards. We cannot think about them apart from each believer in Jesus Christ. Rewards and believers go together. They are not to be separated.

We know something about the grace of God. We should know something about the rewards from God. When you think about God's grace, you naturally think about that which is unmerited. You cannot say this about rewards, because rewards are merited. In grace there is no obligation, but in rewards there is an obligation. In grace it is a free gift, but in rewards you will pay for service. In grace it is received by faith. In rewards it is a recompense for work. In



grace it is without money. In rewards it is with great cost. In grace it depends on Christ. In rewards it depends on the believer. In grace we look to God's faithfulness. In rewards we look to the believer's faithfulness. Grace is the unmerited kindness of God manifested in Christ Jesus. Rewards are an attainment reached through our own service, holy living, and fidelity to the faith.

In a very brief way we want to establish the fact that rewards are to be given. Note the fact of rewards set forth in the Scriptures. (*Take the time to check the following verses: Luke 6:22,23,35; Ephesians 6:8; Colossians 3:24; Revelation 22:2.*) Just bear in mind as you think about these verses that our Lord is not unfaithful that He should forget our labor of love.

Perhaps you heard the story of the Christian who was dying and appeared to be disturbed. He was questioned about his salvation. He said he was saved. But he also said that he had really done nothing for Jesus Christ. He said, "I must face Jesus Christ and have no sheaves to lay at His feet." The thought of meeting Jesus Christ with his own hands empty clouded his brow.

Again we want to think about the different acts that merit reward. Note II Corinthians 5:10 and I Corinthians 3:13-15. The believer is to be rewarded according to his works, whether he builds wood, hay, stubble, or gold, silver, and precious stones. Thus we see how important it is that we serve aright.

Take a look at II Timothy 4:7,8. Paul kept the faith. Paul was found in the conflict not as a spectator but as a participant. He finished the work God had given him to do, and then he looked to the reward. Note also Revelation 2:19,23.

It is interesting to observe that rewards are connected with our Lord's return. Note Revelation 22:12. In this world we shall have tribulation, trials, and testings, but our rewards, for the great part, lie beyond this age.

(Continued on next page)

## Suggested Program

Pre-Prayer Service

Hymn: *I Would Be Like Jesus*

Scripture Reading: II Timothy 4:6-8

Silent Meditation

Hymn: *Trust and Obey*

Prayer Time: Requests for prayer

Announcements and Offering

Special number: Vocal or instrumental

Leader's Presentation

First Speaker

Second Speaker

Third Speaker

General Discussion

Leader's Summary

Closing Hymn: *I Surrender All*

Friendship Circle

Benediction

(Continued from previous page)

We must strive lawfully. Note II Timothy 2:5. The runner or the wrestler in the ancient games was never crowned unless he strictly followed the rules of the game. What about you and me? We must faithfully follow the rules also. We will some day stand before the Lord and receive our reward. "Hold fast that thou hast, that no man take thy crown." Each of the five crowns mentioned in the Bible is a reward for specific service rendered. All rewards are proportioned according to what we have done.

We have an inspiration for service. Note John 4:36. The whole idea of rewards gives us a tremendous inspiration for fidelity in life and faithfulness in service. No wonder the apostle Paul said, "I also run." He also said, "So fight I, that I may obtain" and "I press for the prize."

It would be good for us to read the account of the talents found in Matthew 25:14-30. How sad that there was one who buried his talent. He neglected the abilities that God had given him, and he failed to do what was required of him. Note verse 21: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." This man was promoted to greater honors and more important trusts. If you read the account carefully you will discover that no one was excused. God will judge men, not merely for doing wrong, but also for not doing right. If you have even one talent, you had better treat it with respect.

### First Speaker

We are admonished to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, and not to work it in. A Christian person works because he is saved by the grace of God. He is not working to be saved. He knows that it is not by works lest any man should boast.

### Second Speaker

If we accept the Word of God, then we know that Christ will come to judgment. This is a very strong argument why we should be willing to deny ourselves and follow Him. This is a very good reason why we cannot afford to neglect any of our abilities. We must give ourselves to Him in season and out of season.

### Third Speaker

We ought to be thankful for the Church. Our local church may be small, it may be feeble, and it may have much opposition, but it is still the church at work in the world. As followers of the Christ and members of Christian Endeavor, we can work through the channels of the church. The more we shall work and build, the more we shall see

### Questions for Discussion

1. Since God is not asking us to do something that cannot be done, are we really doing the things that we know should be done?
2. What are some of the things that we should be doing for Christ and His Church?
3. Do you think it is wrong to hope for a reward for service done? Why do you think it is wrong? If it is not wrong, what are you doing now to work for a reward?
4. What would be our reward now if all of us would work hard for the next ten days to build up our society?
5. How do you explain II John 8: "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward"?
6. How great a reward is satisfaction?

the church grow and take on new strength.

### Leader's Summary

Some day it is going to happen. The saints of light will be rewarded. That will be a time of great joy and excitement. It will also be a time of regret. We don't want to be ashamed at His coming. We want to have sheaves to lay at His feet. We don't want to go and face Him empty-handed. Just to see Him will be of more worth to us than any reward we shall receive. The Italians say, "See Naples and die," but we say, "See the face of Jesus by faith and live." If a cup of water has its own reward, just think of the reward that will come to the man who has invested everything he has for the extension of the Kingdom of God. Great shall his reward be in heaven!

### Goals for Tomorrow

1. I shall strive to be my best tomorrow, that what days remain will be days wherein I shall give my best.
2. I shall strive to master one book of the Bible that I might be well grounded in God's truth and from that point reach out to know some other books of the Bible.
3. I shall allow the Holy Spirit to move into my life completely that He may equip me for the days of service ahead of me.
4. I shall look forward and work with the return of Christ in mind and heart.
5. I shall work, in season and out of season, and some day hear Him say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of life."

### Resolutions That Lead to Rich Awards

If you recall our Christian Endeavor Pledge it speaks about "strive to do." It does not take any skill to drift, but it takes all that you have to go against the

stream. Here are some resolutions that you can make that will bring rich rewards to you.

1. *I resolve to show a more Christlike spirit in my own home.*

You are best known in your home. Here they see you in action. Here they see you in your high as well as your low moments. Here they know your attitudes and the way you think. Here they know your likes and your dislikes. Well, they know if you are solid gold or just brittle clay. Carry out this resolution in your home and you will come into a rich reward. No, it won't be a gold cup, but it will be a conferred blessing upon your life.

2. *I resolve to confess Christ at every opportunity.*

Confessing Jesus Christ is vital. What is more wonderful than to share Christ with someone else? The Lord wants you to be a witness. How rewarding, after you have shared Christ with a friend, that you discover he is solidly won to Christ! Jesus said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." This is indeed a holy art to win people for Jesus Christ. Be a witness today and enjoy the rich reward which will surely come your way. "He that winneth souls is wise."

3. *I resolve to try to attend all of the regular services in the church of which I am a member.*

As Christians we do have an obligation to join with others of like precious faith in the work and worship of the Lord. Since you are a member of the church, you do have some responsibilities. You have vowed before the Lord that you would be faithful in all of your relationships toward the church. You know that excuses are not acceptable in the sight of the Lord.

As members of Christian Endeavor we must give ourselves to the church. Our motto should ever be "For Christ and the Church." To carry out these resolutions we need help from God. Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." We can all succeed with Jesus Christ!

Faithfulness in church attendance has its own reward. There is no better way to come into spiritual maturity than through the fellowship of God's people in God's House.

### Daily Bible Readings

M. Aug. 23	Paul Meets a Christian	Acts 7:54-60
T. Aug. 24	Paul Is Called	Acts 9:1-9
W. Aug. 25	Paul Is Converted	Acts 9:10-22
T. Aug. 26	Paul Serves	Acts 13:1-13
F. Aug. 27	Paul Is Persecuted	Acts 16:19-40
S. Aug. 28	Paul Reviews His Life	Galatians 1:11-24
Sun. Aug. 29—Topic:	Reaping God's Rewards	II Timothy 4:6-8

Comments by Rev. Raymond C. Steinhart, pastor of the Boulevard Evangelical Congregational Church, Allentown, Pennsylvania

### Topic Summaries for August

Prepared by the Adult Work Committee

The Adult Work Committee which prepared these summaries included Timothy J. Kribs, chairman; Rev. R. P. Carter, Wanna Sell, and Mrs. Roger D. Vander Kolk.

#### Inter-Faith Marriages (two topics)

##### 1. Equally Yoked

*II Corinthians 6:14-7:1*

Without unity there is discord. This is as true in marriage as in any other area of life. If a team of two draft animals pull together, progress is made and much can be accomplished; if they pull in opposite directions, not only will no progress be made, but much damage can be done. This is equally true in marriage. A common commitment to Jesus Christ is required to have unity in a home. If the faith of the husband and wife differ, they are going in different directions and not only will no progress be made, but much damage can be done to the home and family. Discuss: unity in the home; family devotions where there has been an inter-faith marriage; the result of King Solomon's marriages.

##### 2. Two into One

*Ephesians 5:21-33*

Paul compares the intimate relation between Christ and the Church with the relation of husband and wife in marriage. What does this say about physical and spiritual accord in the home? Does Ephesians 5:31 refer only to physical union or to spiritual unity as well? Can two persons of differing beliefs become one? How can we help our families and others to see the severe problems connected with inter-faith marriages? Some say that because Paul says the husband is the head of the wife this is no problem because the wife is to do whatever the husband says. How does this view harmonize with Ephesians 5:25? Secure a copy of the marriage ceremony used by the pastor and discuss it.

#### Community Problems (three topics)

##### 1. Obscene Literature

*James 1:13-22; II Peter 2:4-10*

What does the Christian do about the problem of obscene literature? Does he try to keep it out of the community and off the newsstands by censorship and legislation? Is effective legislation and

censorship possible? What are the difficulties and dangers of censorship? One of the best ways to express Christian responsibility in matters of objectionable literature and films is to refuse to buy or view such productions, and to encourage similar boycott by others. What is the difference between making a Christian witness and trying to restrict the freedom of others on such matters?

##### 2. Respect for the Law

*Matthew 5:17-20; 22:15-21*

Christians are bound to uphold civil authority and to respect and obey the laws of the land. We also have the responsibility to work for the enactment of laws in our community and country which reflect as fully as possible God's will, as well as to work for the repeal of laws which undermine His will and purpose. Look at specific federal, state or provincial, and local laws and consider: (1) the degree to which these laws seem to be in accord with the group's understanding of the will of God; (2) their own attitudes toward these laws; (3) what action may be needed either to revise attitudes or revise or repeal the laws. Cite examples of lawlessness and disrespect for law and law enforcement and discuss ways to overcome these attitudes.

##### 3. Crisis in Sex Ethics

*Proverbs 7; John 8:3-11*

Many Christians are already aware of the crisis which is developing in North America over sex morality. Not only are Christian standards of premarital chastity and marital fidelity being widely repudiated—but those who advocate greater "freedom" in sex standards are making a strong bid to have their views become publicly acceptable. Christians are under great pressure in this situation. If they are going to resist being influenced themselves and be able to make a good witness to others, they must know very clearly what the Biblical standards are, and must understand that the authority for all our moral law comes not from cultural traditions but from God. A book review could be presented of *Sex and the Christian Life?* by Seward Hiltner or *What Christianity Says About Sex, Love, and Marriage?* by Roland Bainton, both published by Association Press.

#### Choosing Your Words

THE salesperson or receptionist, in the distant 1950's, was greeting you with the question, "Can I help you?" This was never a good question, but it could become significant and warm if one word was added. "How can I help you?" is truly inviting, and it makes sense.

The words we choose, as well as the voice and manner, are important as we share effectively in church work.

M—will not be heard saying, "Won't you come to our meeting?" It has become natural for him to put himself into this invitation: "Won't you come *with me* to our meeting? I'll be glad to call for you . . ."

G—has been serving on a nominating committee. As she invites several members to serve in the unit's offices G—doesn't say, "We want you to take the secretary's job," or something like that. Her invitation, warmer and more accurate, is that the member "become one of our leadership team"—to which she will add that the proposed assignment as secretary is important in its own right and aids one to become well acquainted with and helpful to the entire membership.

The right words are never glib; to be at its best, invitations and messages of leaders will be thought out. And they will be expressed with warmth. B.H.D.

#### Two Helpful Resources

**With Young Adults in Christian Endeavor** by Phyllis G. Brown and Bert H. Davis. This 48-page book covers leadership, organization, program, projects, and includes topic summaries for a year of meetings. Available for 75c from the Publishing Department of the International Society.

**Bibliography for Adult and Young Adult Societies.** Lists available resources under these headings: Adults in the Church, Bible, Church History, Citizenship, Evangelism, Family, Labor, Prayer, Programs, Projects, Science, Sex and Marriage, Stewardship, and Theology. Available without charge from the International Society.

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